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THE VICTORIAN STAGE.*

A retrospect of the English drama from the accession of Queen Victoria to the present time, aiming at a complete record of the various changes in taste and manners which society has undergone during so long an interval, and gauging the fidelity with which they have been reflected on the stage, would, it is needless to say, require a volume to itself, and one very different from any of those which stand at the head of this article. Even a much less ambitious attempt, confined to a criticism of all the best-known plays and most popular actors of the Victorian era, would be entirely beyond the scope of a Quarterly Review article. All that we propose on the present occasion is to note some of the salient points which the retrospect presents, some of the leading contrasts which it affords between the middle and the close of the Victorian era, and some of the comparisons which it suggests between the comedy of the nineteenth and the comedy of the eighteenth century.

The Victorian period of the drama

divides itself into two parts, which though they run into each other, have sufficiently distinct characteristics. Sixty years ago we find the "legitimate drama" struggling to hold its own against opera, burlesque, and melodrama. Some good pieces were produced, but they did not represent the real life of the period, or "take" with society as the new drama has taken. "London Assurance" is a conspicuous example of this defect, and betrays a total absence of that social knowledge which the author, when it was written, had enjoyed few opportunities of acquiring. The talk of the servants is even more absurd than it is in Sheridan's plays, of which indeed "London Assurance" is an obvious imitation. But it may be doubted whether the dramatists of that day aimed at producing anything like real life, like what they themselves saw either in private life or at their clubs and taverns. Now there was a reason at that time why this did not affect their popularity. During the twenty years that passed from about 1830 to 1850 the

* 1. The Drama of Yesterday and To-day. By Clement Scott. Two vols. London: Macmillan, 1899.

2. Dramatic Criticism. By J. T. Grein. London: John Long, 1899.

3. Nights at the Play. By Dutton Cook. Two vols. London: Chatto and Windus, 1883.

4. Some Notable Ham'lets of the Present Time. By Clement Scott. London: Greening, 1900.

5. Helena Faucit (Lady Martin). By Sir Theodore Martin. Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1900.

stage was gradually losing its hold upon the fashionable world; and the majority of play-goers neither knew nor cared whether the scenes set before them professing to represent that world were true to nature or not. It was sufficient that they were thoroughly amusing. Those who were satisfied with Sir Mulberry Hawk, Lord Frederick Verisopht, and Old Wardle, as types of the Kentish squire or the London rake, men whom you might meet at any time in a country manor house or a West End club, would not enquire very particularly whether such men as Sir Charles Coldstream, Alfred Evelyn, or Sir Harcourt Courtley, really lived and moved in English society. They paid for a good laugh, and they got their money's worth.

Now in most of the comedies of the eighteenth century, certainly in the best, the author does intend to hold the mirror up to nature, and to reproduce the society of his own day. It must be allowed that that society was easier to reproduce than our own. It was easier then for the actor who was not to the manner born to put on the outward semblance of a gentleman than it has been since. Dress and demeanor went much further, and there was less room for observing the little niceties of behavior which now distinguish a gentleman or a lady from one who is neither. In Bulwer's "Paul Clifford," the highwaymen passed muster very well in the Assembly Room at Bath, save that one of the party talked and laughed a little too loudly. To be properly dressed, to know how to wear a sword and carry a cane, how to make a bow to a lady and swear a round oath at a lackey, was all that was necessary to constitute a stage gentleman in the reign of George II. As the other sex are naturally more imitative, more gentle, and more graceful than the men, the task was still easier for them, so that

there was no difficulty in finding actors and actresses quite equal to keeping up the illusion in society dramas.

If we turn to the comedies of Murphy, Bickerstaff, Cibber and others of that era, we shall see at once they are meant for pictures of real life, and as long as they continued to be so society went to look at itself through the dramatic mirror. If we can trust the novels of that day, if we can trust the modern imitations of them, such as "Esmond" and the "Virginians," if we can trust the evidence of the Essayists, from Steele and Addison down to Mackenzie and Cumberland, the stage in their day really was a reflection of living manners, of what one might see or hear in the "gilded saloons," in the clubs, and in all places of public amusement frequented by the best society. It was easy, says Mackenzie in "The Lounger" (1786), for a clever actor so to play the hero of a comedy as to make young people confound the copy with the original, and suppose that a real gentleman was the same kind of man as the fictitious one; and therefore the immoral hero had a bad effect. But he could not do this equally with the hero of tragedy. It is clear, therefore, that the eighteenth-century comedies were meant to reproduce upon the stage the life of the boudoir and the ball-room, and that they did to a great extent succeed. As it became more difficult to do this, as there were fewer salient points on which the actor could depend, as the gap between life on the stage and life off it became wider and more apparent, English comedy began to decline, with the result which we have already noticed.

Webster's offer of five hundred pounds in 1843 for the best comedy of "high life" shows that he felt, at least, the want of something different from "London Assurance," which came out in 1841. The prize was awarded to

Mrs. Gore, for a comedy entitled "Quid pro Quo," which was acted at the Haymarket in 1844. Mrs. Nisbet, Mrs. Glover, and Buckstone were all in the cast, and they all did their best. But "Quid pro Quo" was not likely to succeed where "London Assurance" failed. The champion destined to awaken the sleeping beauty was not yet found. Something very much better was required to bring back the world of fashion to the stalls and boxes. On this point we have the testimony of Mrs. Gore herself. In her preface to "Quid pro Quo" she says:—

Were the boxes often filled, as I had the gratification of seeing them for the first representation of "Quid pro Quo," with those aristocratic and literary classes of the community who have absolutely withdrawn their patronage from the English stage, . . . a new order of dramatic authors would be encouraged to write, and of performers to study. But no one familiar with the nightly aspect of our theatres will deny that they are supported by a class requiring a very different species of entertainment; . . . a mere daguerreotype picture of the manners of the day would afford little satisfaction to play-goers accustomed to the disproportion and caricature established with the custom of the stage.

This "aristocratic and literary" company which came the first night did not come again. It was twenty years before they returned to the play. Meanwhile, a reaction was slowly setting in, though we think it must in justice be allowed that it was not fairly established till Robertson made his first great hit. We cannot, indeed, see that he is entitled to such marked pre-eminence as is claimed for him; or that the comparison drawn by his biographer—to whose filial admiration, of course, something must be allowed—between the drama as Robertson found it and the drama as he made it,

is a just criticism, "Pieces," says Mr. Robertson, "which reflected the form of English society were received by lovers of the drama as a breath of fresh air in a vitiated atmosphere." We should not say that the atmosphere of the stage was particularly vitiated forty years ago. It was not that which kept the world away from the theatre. This is very clear, for the atmosphere is sufficiently unwholesome now, and yet society breathes it with delight. Nevertheless, it is an undoubted fact that the production of "Caste," "Ours," "Society," and what are known generally as "the Caste plays," was coincident with a marked rise in the popularity of the stage.

"The new drama" was in some respects a return to nature. Mrs. Gore's prophecy had been fulfilled. A class of playwrights had sprung up, whose realism made them something quite different from Bulwer, or Tom Taylor, or Charles Reade, or Boucicault, or G. H. Lewes. "The Way to Keep Him," for instance, on which the "Serious Family" is founded, might have been a true reflection—"a daguerreotype picture"—of eighteenth-century life. The "Serious Family" is only a caricature of modern life. But the later school of dramatists aim at reproducing on the stage the manners and morals of society as closely as Colman or Cibber, Bickerstaff or Murphy. After a long interval we have returned to the methods of what many critics still consider the most brilliant days of British comedy; and a very important question which we have to ask is whether our dramatic authors are succeeding in the task which they have set themselves. We may ask this question with regard to both authors and performers; and—to take the latter first—if it is no longer so easy to counterfeit the character of a lady or gentleman on the stage as it was when costume was more marked

and manners more formal than they are now, nevertheless it may be granted at once that such parts are usually very well filled at our best theatres. This appears to be, partly at least, owing to a cause with which some leading theatrical critics cannot be sufficiently angry. Mr. Clement Scott, for instance, complains that the old-fashioned, hard-working, conscientious actor, full of stage traditions,¹ devoted to his profession, and caring nothing for social recognition, is thrust to the wall by sprigs of aristocracy and "society schoolgirls" who neither possess any natural aptitude for the stage nor take the trouble to acquire it. Really finished acting is therefore, we are told, in danger of extinction. But is such the impression left upon one's mind after witnessing such plays as "The Liars," or "The Squire of Dames," or "The Passport," or "Liberty Hall," or "The Fool's Paradise," or "Lady Ursula?" As to the truth of these dramas we shall have a word to say presently. But surely the acting, if in some cases it lacked power, seldom or never lacked finish. The fact that so many ladies and gentlemen have found room for themselves upon the stage is due, among other causes, to the change in manners which we have already mentioned. It shows that they were wanted. The supply has followed the demand; and in the plays that we have ourselves witnessed we see no signs of that crudeness and carelessness which Mr. Scott denounces when he enlarges on the superiority of the old school of actors and the laborious study which produced it.

It is moreover to be remembered that what is complained of as injurious to the English stage has also its good side. The change in question

has tended to raise the social status of the actor. Actors and actresses are now welcomed in society. They have the manners and the habits of the class with which they mingle, and to which many of them naturally belong. This result has undoubtedly contributed greatly to the success of the drawing-room drama during the last quarter of a century. The theatre has again become the fashion. The aristocratic spectators who crowd the stalls and boxes see the characters which are taken from their own class simply and naturally acted. The social education which is open to a large proportion of the theatrical profession has enabled managers and proprietors to minimize the difficulties created by those changes in the external aspect of society to which we have before referred and to bring before the curtain the ladies and gentlemen of Mayfair and Belgravia, of Pall Mall and Piccadilly, in such faultless guise that they might have stepped from the stalls on to the stage at that moment.

Unfortunately, however, it is not possible to do for the plays themselves exactly what has been done for the actor and actress. Modern life is externally so quiet and undemonstrative, the fine gentleman of to-day shrinks so rigidly from anything that is impulsive or emotional, and has so constantly before his eyes Lord Monmouth's great rule of conduct, the fear of making himself ridiculous, that to produce any effect upon the stage it is absolutely necessary to raise it somewhat above the actual level. It requires a little artificial color, as the actress requires a little rouge. Incidents and actions must be accentuated; and it would probably be impossible for the most accomplished dramatist to construct a play which, while an exact and unembellished copy of what we should not be sur-

¹ Sir Theodore thinks that Helena Faucit's early success was partly due to her ignorance of stage traditions.

prised to see at a London reception, should be neither insipid nor unintelligible. Broad effects are wanted on the stage; and the faint smiles and furtive glances and almost imperceptible gestures, all that makes up the by-play at a large party, would be invisible to nine-tenths of the audience, if not to the whole of it, across the footlights. It is this supreme necessity which, in spite of admirable acting, still imparts a certain air of unreality to many of our most popular modern plays. On the stage the colors must be heightened, and they harmonize ill with the outward quietude, the general pallor, of contemporary life. It was different a hundred years ago. Strongly comic stage incidents, if not such as actually occurred, were then not inconsistent with the general tone of fashionable society; they bore about them no air of improbability. But they are improbable, if not impossible, at the present day.

We will give a single instance of what we mean. In that amusing piece the "Liars," a lady's husband is so immersed in business, and apparently so unconscious that it is any part of his duty to make himself agreeable to his wife after marriage, that she is on the point of consoling herself with some one else. The husband hears of it and rushes into a room where among a group of guests stands the favored lover, with the lady on his arm, ready for an immediate start. The husband is furious. A common friend intervenes, and what is his remedy? The wife has consented to elope; she has already been unfaithful in her heart; and her husband is informed that it will be all right if he only takes her out to supper! The gentleman who prescribes this treatment is one who has a great reputation for composing marital quarrels, and getting ladies out of difficulties. He does not give this bit of

advice to the husband in secret, but proclaims it openly before the assembled group. "If you don't make love to your wife, some other fellow will," he says. And the way to prevent this misfortune is to treat her to lobster salad!

Little incidents of this kind are constantly turning up in these fashionable pieces and destroying the illusion. Something of the kind seems to be indispensable to add piquancy to our domestic comedy. But if that quality can only be purchased by the introduction of broad farce, it is too high a price to pay for it. The contrast between the pure realism of the whole play and the absurdity of the comic "relief" is too marked; and no gift of genius in the actor who presents it could make it appear otherwise. There is of course a farcical leaven, to which no one can object, in almost all comedies. But it should neither be relied upon as the centre of attraction nor introduced, however sparingly, in violation of all those social conventionalities which legitimate comedy is bound to respect.

To turn again for a moment to the performers themselves, as distinct from the plays in which they act—we cannot help enquiring whether, with all the grace and finish, all the humor, and all the ease which characterize our best comedians, there is still not something wanting to the perfection of their art; a something rather to be felt than described; a something which, whether we call it greater earnestness, or greater reality, or greater power, should make us one of the party on the stage, and forgetful that we are only lookers-on. There is a good deal in Mr. Grein's book with which we cannot agree. But we think he is approaching a truth, though we regret to say so, in what he writes of "Lady Ursula." At all events it will serve to illustrate our meaning:—

The part [Lady Ursula] allotted to Miss Millard was worthy of a great actress; and a great actress would have lifted the play. But Miss Millard played nicely, sweetly, coyly, like a London *bourgeoise* of the outer circle who delights in male fancy dress, with due deference to Mrs. Grundy. It was an agreeable performance in a minor key.

Mr. Grein is decidedly wrong on one point—there is nothing of the *bourgeoise* in Miss Millard's acting; but he is right upon the whole. Lady Ursula is one of those performances which on coming away we at once pronounce "charming." To vary Mr. Grein's words, it is only pretty, where it ought to be powerful.

We have next to consider a much more delicate question; the morality of the modern stage. We remember, when "Liberty Hall" came out, hearing a lady well known in the ranks of fashion, and an indefatigable playgoer, express lively satisfaction that a play had at last been produced to which you could take your daughters. It is undeniable that authors do not scruple to present upon the stage now what they would not have ventured to exhibit during the earlier years of the Victorian era. Vice and profligacy will of course supply food for comedy as long as the theatre exists. But there are two ways of introducing vice. It may be said that many of the heroines of the society drama go no further than Lady Teazle did, if so far. But in the "School for Scandal" the scene between Lady Teazle and Joseph Surface, with the discovery of the former, is turned into a farce; and Joseph's arguments in support of his suit, and the lady's explanation of the only motives which could make her consent to it, are so laughable, and so far removed from anything resembling passion, that no harm is done. There is no suggestiveness, no implied

recognition of vice as a matter of course. The whole thing is a caricature.

It is very different with some modern plays, the chief interest of which is made to consist in bringing the two worlds, the *monde* and the *demi-monde*, into as close juxtaposition as possible, and even in blurring the lines by which they are separated from each other. We are told that the popularity of such plays is due to the fact that they do really represent a corresponding deterioration in the tone of English society and the moral standards which govern it; and that in this one respect, at all events, they reproduce the very form and fashion of the time. In two books which have lately been published by authors of repute, to whom the doors of society are open, we find this deterioration deplored as an acknowledged fact. The Warden of Merton, who may be supposed to write with knowledge, says in his "Reminiscences" that there is, he fears, an inner circle of the fashionable world in which much is habitually said and done which in the earlier Victorian era was a comparatively rare exception, even in the gayest society; and Mr. Lilly, in his recently published volume, "First Principles in Politics," tells us still more confidently that "one of the notes of the age is a pronounced laxity of practice—and, what is worse, of theory—about sexual matters." What weight is to be attached to the gossip of club smoking-rooms is, of course, a matter of opinion. But the fact remains that "society" lends a favorable ear to such plays as "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," "The Gay Lord Quex," and "The Profligate"; and that, if some ladies of fashion hesitate to let their daughters see them, many do not. Now if what Mr. Brodrick and Mr. Lilly assert is really true, we must not suppose that it is the license of

the stage that has led to the corruption of manners, but rather the corruption of manners which has encouraged the license of the stage.

If there is any truth in the above remarks, it would seem that the palmy days of pure comedy must be looked for in the past; and the gradual encroachment of the novel on the province of the drama points the same way. The fact is, every kind of comedy, be it of intrigue or character, must of necessity be more or less the comedy of manners, dependent, that is, on the aspects and the conventions of society at any given time; and if the manners of the *fin-de-siècle* do not lend themselves readily to theatrical representation, we have only to expect that our dramatic productions will bear traces of the difficulties which they have had to contend with. The "repose" of Vere de Vere cannot well be imitated on the stage, and the mirth which is introduced to relieve it is only purchased at the cost of congruity, probability or decency.

Mr. Robertson was the first playwright to set himself seriously to work to overcome these difficulties, and to present real life upon the stage in all its natural simplicity. His popular career may be said to have commenced with "David Garrick" (1864), and to have culminated with "Caste" in 1867. "Society" and "Ours" appeared between the two; and "Play," "School," "Dreams" and "War" followed them. We cannot say that we think any of them models of constructive art. They were plays of home life, depending to a great extent on those domestic incidents with which we are all familiar and which English people always love. The two most popular of the series are, we suppose, "Caste" and "School." But the misfortune of "Caste" is that there is neither plot nor point in it. The marriage of George and Esther is no re-

buke to caste; and the marriage of Sam and Polly is no contrast. "School" is even weaker in construction than "Caste." The young ladies' school, which gives its name to the piece, is not in the least degree wanted; while the expedient of Bella Marten turning out to be a lost heiress and the cousin of Lord Beaufoy is too stale to cause the slightest throb of excitement. But in both cases the performers came to the rescue. Hare, Bancroft and Marie Wilton formed a trio who would have made a triumphant success of any well-written play.

In our opinion "Society" is Mr. Robertson's best. There is a real plot in this, and fairly well worked out, but the story keeps less closely to real life than most of the others. Sidney Daryl, the literary barrister, is an old friend in whose reality we have little faith. He is a kind of cross between Charles Surface and Arthur Pendennis—the kind of man whom young writers, with little knowledge of the world, are fond of imagining, and what aspiring youths fresh from Oxford or Cambridge would like to be taken for. Sidney Daryl is thoroughly conventional, as much so as Charles Torrens in "London Assurance." The "man about town," living in chambers in the Temple, writing a smart magazine article when he is in the humor, for which he is paid enormous sums, constantly receiving letters from the editor of the "Times" begging for a leader on the question of the day, deeply in debt—this is an essential feature of the character—member of a fashionable club, with the *entrée* to all the green-rooms in London—this is the ideal hero of many a young man on first leaving college, though it is needless to say that he exists only in the imagination of such as have no other sources of information. These aspirations have been the ruin of many a clever fellow who but for this silly

vanity might have been a respectable member of society, and died a county-court judge. We need not detain the reader any longer over what are known as "the Caste plays." Aided by some of the most skilful and gentlemanly actors and one of the most bewitching actresses of our time, they undoubtedly hit the public taste, and "caught on." Their realism we suppose was their novelty; they showed the public on the stage what they could see at home, and to appetites jaded with the traditional heroes and heroines, the plots and contrivances of the earlier and mid-century comedy, they came as a refreshing change.

We now turn to Mr. Pinero. The worshippers of Robertson say that had there been no Robertson there would have been no Pinero. But Robertson and Ibsen have both gone to the formation of Mr. Pinero as we now know him. If Robertson discarded one stage convention, Ibsen, we are assured, discarded another. If Robertson made the drama more natural and simple, Ibsen, we are told, made it still more real by a larger admixture of vice and misery; he banished from his stage "the trickery of happy endings," which long tradition had raised to the rank of a principle. At this point, then, we are confronted by two questions; what is the end of comedy; and, secondly, if we determine that our play shall not end happily, by what necessary process is our end to be attained? Those who object so strongly to the conventional happy ending seem sometimes to forget that comedy is concerned only with one aspect of human life; that it is a species of satire directed not against crime but folly; and that to introduce into it the machinery which we associate with the darker forms of guilt is to break a butterfly on a wheel—in other words, to confound comedy with tragedy. It is true

enough that in real life the two go side by side; but they are not necessarily or inseparably mixed up together; and comedy, we repeat, is concerned with only one of them. We cannot think, therefore, that the traditional happy ending is deserving of the censure which some modern critics have heaped upon it. If the great end of comedy is, as Dr. Johnson declared, to make us laugh, why should we think it an improvement that it makes us weep?

We may be told that this is only a dispute about words. Dismiss the word comedy, it may be said, and the difficulty is at an end. The division into comedy and tragedy is not an exhaustive one; and the drama which combines both is a truer picture of human life than that which is confined to one. There is some truth in this reply; but the question is whether justice can be done to this combination on the stage. It can be done by the novelist we know. But the action on the stage is compressed within too short a space of time, the canvas is too narrow, to admit of the proper proportions and due perspective being observed. Take Ibsen's "Wild Duck" or Pinero's "Hobby Horse" as examples. The comic parts of these are a very bad preparation for the tragic ending. In the "Wild Duck" nothing prepares us for Hedvig's suicide. The incidents which lead up to it are sordid and vulgar, and inadequate either to bring about such a result or to throw the mind of the reader or spectator into the necessary mood for sympathizing with it. Mr. Pinero, in writing the "Hobby Horse," seems to have been aware of the "restricted conditions of dramatic composition," and how much they interfere with the perfect evolution of the comic and tragic elements. Then why struggle with such difficulties, which can never be successfully overcome?

Whether an unhappy ending must always be brought about by means of vice, profligacy, or crime is another question which the modern school seem inclined to answer in the affirmative. That this is a mistake, however, it requires no very wide research to demonstrate. The "*Bride of Lammermoor*" and "*Kenilworth*" are standing examples of this; and the "*Mill on the Floss*" would be another if the drowning of Tom and Maggie had any connection with anything which had gone before. But both Ibsen and Pinero seem to take it for granted that the only kind of catastrophe worth producing on the stage is that which is caused by immorality, and immorality sometimes of a very coarse and revolting character. Surely it cannot be said that this is required in the interests of art. In the "*Wild Duck*" the discovery of Hedvig's parentage is effected in the most disgusting fashion; while in "*The Ghosts*" and "*The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*," between which there is a strong family likeness, the flavor of the vice set before us is particularly nauseous. Unless it is contended that, in the fullest sense, there is not a single human action which is not fit for dramatic use if it happens to be wanted for the better evolution of the plot, it is not easy to see why a line should not be drawn at such scenes and characters as we are asked to contemplate in the dramas we have named. There is plenty of room for human frailties and vices to do their proper work upon the stage, and develop their natural consequences, without being exhibited in forms not only painful to modesty, but repugnant to ordinary good taste. Yet this is the kind of realism to which we are required to do homage as a special mark of the dramatic renaissance which distinguishes the close of the Victorian era.

We have no hesitation in adding that

this so-called realism is often very unreal, and shows little insight into human nature. A woman like the second Mrs. Tanqueray is not the heroine of suicide. Her one conversation with Captain Archdeall is sufficient to show the stuff she was made of. Such creatures do not take poison; they are too fond of life. As much may be said of Dunstan Renshaw in "*The Profitgate*;" and it was a wise instinct which dictated his reprieve when the play was first produced in London. Suicide was too good for him; and though he certainly intended to destroy himself, the fact that he failed prevents the audience from feeling a sympathy of which he was totally unworthy. There has been a great run upon suicide in the modern drama. It is a very convenient exit for a troublesome character, we grant; but it imparts a sameness to the Ibsen and Pinero drama which we could well dispense with. These dramatists will discover in time, we think, that society, like the old lady who had ceased to relish her murders, has had nearly enough of this highly-flavored dish. At all events, we protest against this kind of plot being called realism. Of course, if either dramatist would consent to a verdict of temporary insanity in the case of their unhappy victims, there would be no more to be said; but that would not be "high art." As a matter of probability, the number of persons who commit suicide in full possession of their faculties is so few as to make these recurrent instances in the drama not a reflection of truth, but exactly the reverse. Legitimate comedy, we may repeat, is not intended to take life too seriously, and even to those writers who despise such canons, it is open to distinguish between different kinds of misery. If a play is not hilarious it need not be morbid, and if the ending is not happy it need not be nasty.

We should be unjust however to Mr. Pinero if this was the last word we had to say about him. All his plays are not Ibsenite; and we should like to know to what extent he endorses the opinion of his editor, that Ibsen was necessary to "clear the air" for him.

The author of "Sweet Lavender" required no such assistance as this from the author of "Ghosts." "Sweet Lavender," however, was written in 1886, before Ibsen had begun to make his influence felt on the English drama, which is chiefly seen in "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" and in "The Profligate." There is a touch of it in "The Hobby Horse," a very disagreeable play; but it was perfectly easy to ridicule pseudo-philanthropy without introducing such a painful and we would say unnatural situation as that between the lady and the curate. Mrs. Jermyn in the play must have seen that Noel Brice was falling in love with her. What woman would not have seen it? But Mr. Pinero makes her totally unconscious. Pseudo-philanthropy lends itself very readily to comic treatment, witness Mrs. Weller, Mrs. Jellyby and Mrs. Pardiggle; and Mr. Pinero was going out of his way to make an amiable young married lady and a guileless young clergyman the victims of this particular folly. As a satire the plot is both watery and clumsy. Ibsen seems rather to have thickened the atmosphere for Mr. Pinero than to have cleared it for him. Somebody of course had to be miserable at the end; that is *de rigueur* with the Ibsenites. But the lady should have been the victim of a hopeless attachment as well as the gentleman. They should have indulged in one last embrace and then torn themselves asunder. The knowledge that they were destined to pine away in secret for years to come could not have failed to be highly gratifying to all those

cheerful playgoers who agree with Mrs. Gamp that life is a "wale."

It is not easy to see why a bad ending is more like real life than a good one. People do get into scrapes and get out of them again every day; they even make love to other men's wives without anybody being consigned to hopeless wretchedness. We did not suppose that Mr. Sullen broke his heart when his wife went off with Aimwell. The novelist or dramatist who first hangs his characters "up a tree" and then cuts them down before they are quite gone is guilty in the eyes of Ibsen and his school of a vulgar weakness. It may be so; but it seems to us that the universal craving for "happy endings" is something like a proof that they cannot be so unreal as the new school represent them to be. There are of course bad endings to equivocal complications in real life but it is not the part of pure comedy to deal with these; and if we take the mixed drama in which tragedy and comedy are combined, it will not seldom be found that both have been spoiled. There is not room for both even in a five-act play.

The Victorian drama has not been rich in tragedy, and what we have to say on this subject had better be deferred till we come to our actors and actresses; but it shines greatly in farce, burlesque, and melodrama. To attempt to pick and choose out of the legion of plays over which three generations have split their sides would be a hopeless task. They all have this in common, that they depend even more than modern comedy does on particular individuals. "Box and Cox" was nothing without Buckstone. "Parents and Guardians" was nothing without the Keeleys. The Adelphi farce was nothing without Wright and Paul Bedford. These were actors whose entrance on the stage, before they had spoken a word, was the sig-

nal for a general titter; their faces were simply irresistible; and it was only necessary for them to open their lips for that titter to become a roar. It did not matter what they said, and they indulged freely in gag. We doubt if there is anything on the stage now, unless it is "Charley's Aunt," quite equal to the farces which filled the London theatres from 1840 to 1860. Among others never to be forgotten, besides those just mentioned, are "The Camp at Chobham," "The Area Belle," "To Oblige Benson," "Boots at the Swan," "Lend me Five Shillings"—"all these and more come flocking," as Milton hath it, at the call of memory, which carries us back to the middle of the century. No doubt we have some capital farces at the present day, but somehow they seem to want the rollicking fun, the abandon, we might almost say the sincerity, of the earlier ones.

Perhaps it may be thought that with the improvement and refinement of comedy the taste for broad farce is less decided than it used to be. Yet he will scarcely say so who has been present at the performance of "My Milliner's Bill," or "The Magistrate," or "The Widow Hunt," or "Charley's Aunt," or "The Curate," or "The Private Secretary," plays which we select at random, and not as being necessarily the most laughable of those which keep the stage. "There is touch-and-go farce in your laugh," said Mr. Crummles to Nicholas Nickleby; and though we never knew exactly what particular species of drollery was signified by "touch-and-go," we were willing to take it on trust; and we have known several actors of whose eyes, noses, mouths and legs the same might be said, with the additional point in their favor that their gravity was more comic than their levity. We are not sure that we have any actor now, unless it is Mr. Penley, who is a

walking farce in himself. Still it cannot fairly be said that farce is less popular now than it was in the days referred to, when an Adelphi farce was regarded as the greatest theatrical treat which a Londoner could enjoy. In spite of the little difference we have mentioned, English farce still holds a position higher of its kind perhaps, though it may be a lower kind, than comedy. There is one thing in favor of it, namely, that there can never be any mistake about it. In looking at a farce which professes to be that and nothing else, we are at liberty to abandon ourselves wholly to inextinguishable laughter, unchecked by any troublesome doubts of its artistic claims upon us. But when we are trembling on the border line between farce and comedy we feel no such freedom; and with a large class of spectators this will always constitute a point in favor of the less formal drama so long as the theatre exists.

Melodrama still holds its ground in its old hereditary home, but not in its original glory, nor need we say much about it in the present article. It hardly calls forth the highest powers of either actress or actor. Madame C  leste indeed made herself a great name in melodrama, but it is a name which we prefer to forget. The artificiality of melodrama places it almost beyond the range of dramatic criticism; and though it may be thought perhaps that this is no less true of farce, there is a difference between the two showing that the same canon is not equally applicable to both. Farce, after all, is only comedy in her cups: a grotesque exaggeration of what might really happen, and which in the wildest caricature retains some of the features of ordinary sober life. Now this is not so with melodrama. We are not reminded by it of anything that ever happens, or is likely to happen, in real life, and we are scarcely

therefore in a position to criticize the actors in it, as men engaged in holding the mirror up to nature, though it be nature in a distorted shape. We admit, of course, that farce is only a very imperfect test of real histrionic ability, but still it is some test, and we have not felt called upon to exclude it from a notice of the English drama. We are considering the truth and nature of the modern English drama, and melodrama has little to do with either.

The English stage at present is not destitute of tragic talent, though the nineteenth century has given us no native tragedy of the first class. Our tragic actors have established themselves for the most part on Shakespeare, and it is remarkable that of his best representatives several have not been Englishmen. Since the accession of Queen Victoria our leading tragedians may be counted on one's fingers—Macready, Phelps, Kean, Fechter, Salvini, Sarah Bernhardt, Irving, Miss Glyn, Lady Martin, and Mrs. Warner almost exhaust the list. But he who has seen Macready as Lear, Fechter as Hamlet, Salvini as Othello, and Lady Martin as Lady Macbeth, has seen some tragic acting which will make him regret the less that he was not born a century and a quarter sooner. If we add Sir Henry Irving's Shylock, in which he excels all his predecessors, we have named, we think, the best tragic performances of the Victorian era. We should say that in versatility, Lady Martin excelled them all; and on this point Sir Theodore Martin, in his deeply interesting "Life" of this delightful actress, lays particular stress. Our article was in type before the "Life" of Lady Martin appeared, nor had we seen Professor Wilson's opinion of her Lady Macbeth when the foregoing paragraph was written. We are happy to find so dis-

tinguished a critic in agreement with ourselves. After seeing the performance he exclaimed, "We have all been wrong; this is the true Lady Macbeth," and thenceforth he abandoned the view that Mrs. Siddons was the ideal impersonation of Shakespeare's heroine. This is a question on which those only who saw both Mrs. Siddons and Lady Martin have any right to speak. The former is said to have been deficient in that quality which Sir Theodore Martin thinks essential to the highest histrionic art, a sense of humor and the power of giving expression to it.

Sadlers Wells was for a long time the home of the legitimate or rather, we should say, the Shakespearian drama; and here Phelps and Mrs. Warner, who started together in 1844, made a gallant attempt to revive genuine tragedy, as Webster had done to revive genuine comedy, and to lure back to it the audiences which had crowded to hear Kemble and Siddons. The theatre opened with "Macbeth," and it was the opinion of some competent critics that in this character Phelps was superior to Macready. Mrs. Warner is said to have played Lady Macbeth with "great care and force." But the undertaking was a failure. Phelps kept it up for eighteen years, though in 1847 he lost the services of Mrs. Warner, who was succeeded by Miss Glyn, an accomplished actress, but who did not enable Phelps to effect the great object which he had in view. Since Macready's death, Fechter, Salvini, Henry Irving and Lady Martin are the only four tragedians who have been the talk of society and been really run after. The dreamy, poetical and refined character of Hamlet was admirably given by Fechter, who also looked the part to perfection; and Salvini's Othello was a still more wonderful performance. Here human passion was portrayed

with all the violence of despair mingled with all the agony of grief, first for the infidelity of Desdemona and then for the loss of her, without the slightest suspicion of rant or any superfluous gesticulation. We should assign to Salvini's Othello the first place in tragedy during the last fifty years; and we hardly know whether to give the second to Fechter or to Lady Martin. In the banquet scene in "Macbeth" she rose to the summit of her noble art.

We shall wound no susceptibilities, we hope, if we add that Miss Ellen Terry is better fitted for Beatrice, Rosalind (which, however, she has never played), or Juliet than for Ophelia or Desdemona. Her personal charms, her animal spirits, her girlish gaiety, maintained to the last, and her clever assumption of characters which really suit her, have made her decidedly the reigning favorite of the last thirty years; and she is probably, take her all round, the most popular actress of the Victoria age. We cannot honestly say she is the best, but she and Sir Henry Irving will always be remembered, with Phelps and Mrs. Warner, and with Charles Kean and Mrs. Kean, as the leading dramatic revivalists of the last half-century. Their efforts have been attended with varying degrees of success; but there is no doubt that they have contributed greatly to that restoration of the stage to the favor of the higher classes in which the Kendals, the Bancrofts, the Hares, the Wyndhams and Alexanders, with such actresses as Mary Moore, Marlon Terry, Gertrude Kingston, Winifred Emery, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Miss Millard and Miss Olga Nethersole have also had a large share. Charles Kean's Shakespearian revivals at the Princess's were chiefly remarkable for their scenic effects. Kean himself was a gentlemanly actor in the higher comedy, but his wife was the favorite. Her

Viola in "Twelfth Night" was a treat not to be forgotten.

Among recent attempts to revive the Shakespearian drama, that of Mr. F. R. Benson deserves notice, not so much for any unusual merit in the acting, as for a certain originality in methods and aims.

Many actors have brought out isolated plays of Shakespeare with more or less success; Mr. Benson has made it his business to produce him continually. Most managers who have sought to popularize the great dramatist have relied chiefly on splendid scenic effects, and an almost pedantic accuracy in costume and decorative details; Mr. Benson's object is to show, in the words of one of his critics, "that Shakespeare can be played for Shakespeare's sake." When a piece is placed on the stage in such a way as to distract attention from the picture to the frame, no honor is done either to author or actor. Mr. Benson's presentations are a protest against this system. His staging is simple but adequate; and careful study, combined with vigor, intelligence and a refreshing freedom from affectation, claim for his efforts the encouragement of all those playgoers who worship the greatest of playwrights, and who care more for the play than the spectacle.

Among the comic actresses of the present day, though comparisons are odious, we have no hesitation in assigning the first place to Mrs. Kendal. She is so easy and so natural, and, what is a great point in her favor, seems so thoroughly at home in her best parts, that we might feel inclined to say of her what Goldsmith said of Garrick:—

On the stage he was natural, simple,
affecting.

'Twas only that when he was off he
was acting—

if we did not know that the second
line was wholly untrue of Mrs. Ken-

dal. Still, we may say she is never more natural than when she is on the stage.

Lady Bancroft essayed the part of Lady Teazle at the Prince of Wales's in 1874; but, as was to be expected, she appeared rather as the country hoyden than as the finished woman of fashion which Mrs. Kendal and Miss Winifred Emery have taken to be the true interpretation of the character. According to Mr. Dutton Cook, however, Marie Wilton was playing the part as it was played by Mrs. Jordan, who must have known as well as anybody what Lady Teazle was intended to be. Lady Bancroft is said to have made a most satisfactory Georgina in "Money." But farce after all is her forte rather than comedy.

For broad farce, the nearest approach to the popular style of fifty years ago has been made, we think, by Mr. Toole, Mr. Penley and Mrs. John Wood, whose powers in this line are simply irresistible. In her fearless freedom from all squeamishness or prudery she reminds us occasionally of Miss Woolgar, though very unlike her in person. Lady Bancroft is the more finished actress of the two; but we doubt if Mrs. John Wood has not produced more laughter.

Of our leading actors at the present day we cannot, we must confess, place Sir Henry Irving at the head. In some kinds of tragedy and in some serious plays which are neither tragedies nor comedies, he is excellent; but not more excellent than Wyndham, Hare, Alexander, Cyril Maude, Arthur Cecil, Beerbohm Tree, Forbes Robertson, Clayton and Kendal in their respective walks. Many of our tragic actors have been equally good, if not better, in comedy. Sir Theodore Martin quotes the dictum of Socrates, that "the genius of comedy is the same as that of tragedy, and that the writer of tragedy ought to be the writer of comedy also." We can-

not enlarge on this text, suggestive as it is. But Sir Theodore continues: "This is equally true of the actor. He will never reach the highest point in his profession unless he possesses the double gift of tragic passion and humorous expression. This combination, possessed by Garrick in a remarkable degree, is by no means common." Macready and Phelps, however, possessed it. Macready was thought to make an excellent Sir Peter Teazle; with the help of Count D'Orsay he succeeded greatly in Evelyn; while Phelps was adjudged to be at his best as Lord Ogleby in "The Clandestine Marriage."

Sir Henry Irving might, perhaps, succeed in Joseph Surface if he could bring himself down to Mephistopheles in a laced waistcoat and peruke. It is a character that is seldom well acted. In the last performance of it at the Haymarket Mr. Valentine was not a success—Mr. Cyril Maude, as Sir Peter, and Mr. Kemble, as Sir Oliver, carrying off the honors among the gentlemen. But the actor of whom we feel we should never tire, who is always natural, humorous and genial is Mr. C. Wyndham. To see him in "The Squire of Dames," with Miss Fay Davis, is to witness a scene which haunts one. "You are the only eligible man I have met since I came to England," says the American young lady, "who hasn't proposed to me." "You see I have been so busy; I'll do it to-morrow," says Wyndham, with a smiling glance at the fair challenger. At this point Wyndham is simply perfection. The tone of his voice, the expression of his face, the turn of his head, all assist each other, and all share alike in a result which is comedy of the highest order. We have spoken of the ease, the adroitness, the air of good society which marks our modern actors and actresses. Where so many possess these, it is as difficult as it would be invidious to award the palm to any

one in particular. But probably among our younger actors no better example of this combination could be found than Charles Wyndham.

Mr. John Hare excels in the exhibition of suppressed feeling, whether serious or otherwise. An example of this may be seen in the "Scrap of Paper," and a still better one in the "Fool's Paradise," already mentioned, a play founded on the case of Mrs. Maybrick, in which he plays the physician. But he has made a particular class of characters his own—"the shrewd, sarcastic and yet kindly elderly gentleman"—so says Mr. Dutton Cook in his "Nights at the Play;" and it is the statement of a very competent critic. Mr. Hare was one of the pioneers of the new style of comedy to which we have so often referred. Writing of Tom Taylor's comedy of "Victims," originally brought out at the Haymarket in 1837, and revived by Mr. Hare when manager of the Court Theatre in 1878, Mr. Cook observes:—

The comedy pleased, however, at the Haymarket, supported by the strong company then directed by Mr. Buckstone; nor does it fail to amuse at the Court Theatre. But by the more subdued and refined system of interpretation now assigned to it, the coarseness of the play's artifices and the rude unreality of its characters stand fully betrayed. Twenty years ago an element of bolsterous farce was indispensable to comedy at the Haymarket, while of acting generally it may be said that it was then required to be rather theatrically effective than punctiliously lifelike. Mr. Hare's strict regard for truth and nature, and his affection for a *mise en scène* of fantastically picturesque quality, seem out of harmony with dramas of rough humor and broad caricature. The dignity of comedy perhaps paired off long since with the dignity of history; still in plays affecting to portray modern life, manners and character, a certain reserve seems desirable in regard to

the means employed to stir our mirth.

We should hope that Mr. Cook is wrong both about the dignity of comedy and the dignity of history; but he is right about Mr. Hare. The dignity of comedy has been to a great extent restored, though the inevitable drop of farce with which it still seems necessary to season it is like adding sugar to champagne. Still the work which has been accomplished by the actors and actresses who in the last year of the nineteenth century were in possession of the English stage—performers who have made their reputations for the most part within the last thirty years—is immense. The change is well described in the passage we have just quoted by one who saw the beginning of it. "In plays affecting to portray modern life, manners and character, a certain reserve seems desirable in regard to the means employed to stir our mirth." This "certain reserve" has been introduced. The "rough humor and broad caricature" of the mid-century have given way to the refinement and quietude which have once more brought comedy into touch with the best society. This indeed is a great work to have accomplished, though traces of the old style "*veteris, vestigia culpæ*," still survive; and things are still said and done in comedies supposed to represent the fashionable manners of the day, which would never be heard or seen in a lady's drawing-room.

Whether the dramatic revival which has been witnessed by the present generation signifies the permanent restoration of the stage to all its former popularity remains to be seen. Speaking of the Shakespearian revival at Sadlers Wells in 1845, Mr. Clement Scott quotes an interesting passage from the *Athenæum* of that date, in which the writer says: "Society may

have outgrown the drama, and by many it is suspected that such is actually the case in England." The suspicion was premature, as we have seen, and yet it may be doubted whether the evidence on which it rested was not the result of causes something more than ephemeral, and not unlikely to survive the reaction which set in forty years ago.

When books are the luxury of a few, the stage is the resort of the many. As a taste for reading is diffused, and the means of gratifying it extended, the hold which the drama once possessed on the popular mind is naturally weakened. It is only to be expected that with the decline of its importance there should be some diminution of its excellence; so that both the highly educated and cultured classes, as well as those below them, no longer find what they want in it, so fully as they did of old. In a thoughtful and reflective age, when the public mind is occupied with problems both social and religious which go to the very root of established creeds and traditions, it is inevitable that a spirit of greater gravity should pervade society than is altogether consistent with the full enjoyment of theatrical representations. If Mr. Ruskin is right in his estimate of the "melancholy" of the present age—a melancholy born of the feeling that we are drifting away from all our old landmarks and anchorages towards "we know not what mysterious doom"—we have here a reason for distrusting the permanence of that unquestionable popularity which the theatre commands at present. It is clear, moreover, that the demand for mere amusement has

enormously increased, and the music-hall usurps the place of the theatre. The political and social issues now before the world are so large and so engrossing, the changes so perturbing and so rapid, the daily stress and strain so exhausting, that we have neither time nor energy to spend on the serious discussion of dramatic themes, or the full enjoyment of the higher stage. The result is a deterioration of taste, and the presentation of much very poor stuff upon the boards. What we want is to be amused, we care not how; the frivolity of the drama seems an indispensable relief from the seriousness of life.

For the drama to attain its highest popularity and success we require a light-hearted age, and an age not much given to reading, or to brooding over the riddles of humanity. Such an age was the eighteenth century. Such was that embodiment of it so admirably described by George Elliot in her picture of "Old Leisure." Shall we ever see a revival of that spirit? This, one would say, is impossible. Yet, in default of it, or something like it, we fear that the English drama, or English comedy at all events, has seen its best days. We have pointed out certain social and moral differences between our age and that of our grandfathers, which seem at first sight to justify the suspicion entertained by some dramatic critics fifty-five years ago. Events may prove that the decay which they then observed was a transient phase of our dramatic art, and its subsequent revival the lasting one. For many reasons we trust that it may be so, but we dare not play the prophet further.

THE NEW HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The swearing of the troops in Flanders is as nothing to the swearing at Westminster, when six hundred and seventy gentlemen take the oath of fealty to Queen and Constitution. A new Parliament is being brought into existence. In the dun-walled chamber, with long, dull benches, called the House of Commons—a musty-odored place, and a disappointment in size to the visitor from the provinces—there are long queues of newly appointed legislators waiting their turn to kiss the Book.

Around the table are the expectant faces of new men, fresh to Parliament, with the flush of the honor of being an M.P. still upon their cheeks. The local political association has declared that the new member will make his voice heard in the Tribunal of the people, and he himself has promised to maintain the best traditions of English political life. But, if an ordinary man, he will have years of Parliamentary stage fright. When he summons courage to address the House in nervous syllables, it will be when the House wants to dine, and so he will talk to a dozen old fogeys drowsing in corners. He will maintain the best traditions of politics by keeping his temper when he wants to take his wife and daughters to the theatre, but cannot do so, because the Party Whip will tell him that a division may be taken at any moment, and he must not leave the House.

This new Parliament will lack nothing in dramatic interest. The Government is strong, but the sections of Radical Opposition are more in line now than they have been for some years. The Irishry have determined that they shall be Ishmaelites, and

from them there will be the customary outbursts of Celtic fury.

Staid and decorous though members may be individually, the House of Commons as a whole can be as rowdy as a medical class when the lecturer is unpopular. When the House is tired of a man, it behaves in a way that can hardly be called kind. There is a hubbub of chatter, and shouting and laughter. The Speaker sternly cries "Order, order!" and for about two minutes there is a lull. Then the roar breaks out again. "'Vide, 'vide, 'vide!" men begin calling, eager for a division to be taken. The shouts are not indiscriminative. "'Vide, 'vide, 'vide, 'vide!" is kept going in solid thumps for all in the world like the stamping of the gallery boys in a theatre when impatient for the curtain to rise.

The cruellest interruption is the yell "Agreed, agreed!" to everything the boresome person is saying. "I am not to be shouted down," defiantly screeches the orator. "Agreed, agreed!" laughs back the House. "In my opinion this is a question—" ("Agreed, agreed!" and rippling laughter)—I say it is a great question not to be treated—"Hear, hear! Agreed, agreed, agreed!" and loud laughter). Is not this a burning matter? ("Agreed, agreed!") Now what I say is—" (Agreed, agreed!") So it goes on until, crack-voiced with shouting, the unappreciated enlightener of Parliament sits down in disgust, and receives one rousing cheer from the House, delighted at having at last snuffed him out.

On great nights, when full-dress debates are in swing, then the House is a striking sight. Though there be six hundred and seventy members, there is only seating room for about four

hundred. The Treasury bench is packed with Ministers and Under-Secretaries, wedged tight like an inside omnibus seat on a rainy day. Across the table on the front Opposition bench, is a row of ex-Ministers and ex-Under-Secretaries, equally uncomfortable. As for the overflow of members, they squat in the gangways, with their feet on one another's coat-tails; or they crowd awkwardly down by the great doorway behind a toe-line which marks the bar. To stand inside this would be to stand inside the House and invite the Speaker to shout "Order, order!" in his severest tone.

On these big nights, with hundreds of men huddled together, all excited, all having party passion strong within them, with hate now and then showing strong, electricity is in the air and nothing in this world,—save it be physical warfare in close combat—can overpass, in the stirring grip of interest, the warfare of words, rapier thrusts and axe blows upon the floor of the House of Commons.

Mr. Chamberlain's personality dominates at Westminster. You see the effect of it on the stray visitors to the House. Mr. Balfour, Sir William Harcourt, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, emerge from the shadow of the Speaker's Chair, walk along to their places, sit down, enter into conversation with their colleagues. The Strangers' Gallery makes no sign of recognition. But when Mr. Chamberlain steps from behind the Chair, and, with head jerked forward, and just a slight frown on his brow, quickly picks a way to the side of Mr. Balfour, then the Strangers' Gallery rustles. Mr. Chamberlain seizes from the table one of the Order Papers for the day before he sits down. Having sat down he holds it to his face for about fifteen seconds, reading it intently. With impatient gesture he then throws it from him. He refixes

his eyeglass, gives a side look at the clock over the door, puts his feet straight out in front of him, nurses his elbows, and there sits, motionless, sphinx-like, until called upon to answer a question.

There are no orators in the House now, except, perhaps, Mr. John Redmond, but among the debaters Mr. Chamberlain is pre-eminent. He is never in a hurry; he is always thoroughly acquainted with his brief; he never leaves anything to chance. Among the many well-dressed men in the House he is among the best dressed. Besides a taste in orchids, of which he receives two blooms a day from his conservatories at Highbury—he has an excellent taste in waistcoats and ties. As to his buttonholes, sometimes the orchid is like an enormous purple foxglove; at other times it is like a crimson starfish. The flower is always big, and it is always bright.

No statesman is more feared than Mr. Chamberlain. His very name is anathema to many members of the Opposition. He is hardly loved by some of the old fogeys on the Government side. But every man knows his power. In talking he is pertinent, dogmatic, now and then vicious, showing that he has passion, although under complete control. His words are clear, inclined to be mellow; there is never an involved sentence. At the beginning of a speech he trifles with his notes, neatly written on notepaper and placed on the brass-bound chest at the corner of the table, and which bears a hundred dents inflicted by Mr. Gladstone's ring. Mr. Chamberlain runs his fingers along the side of his notes, getting the edges straight. Then he runs his little finger along top and bottom, doing the same. As he unfolds a principle, he taps his left hand with the forefinger of his right. When explanatory, he taps his two hands together with the fingers slightly apart.

Then suddenly, like a flash of lightning—reaching a point involving his personal honor—there is a quiver on the parchment face, a tightening of the lips, a narrowing of the eyes. He steps back an instant, grips the edge of the chest, as though holding his passion in, and with a taunt, that sometimes comes perilously near a sneer, he throws his hands from him as though he were casting aside his opponent in contempt.

No man has received such hard blows as Mr. Chamberlain. No man can hit back so well, so witheringly, and make his foe on the opposite bench curl with vexation. Few care to "stand up to Joe." Only one man does so, and does it persistently. That is Mr. Lloyd George, an excitable, gleaming-eyed little Welchman, who finds joy in baiting Mr. Chamberlain, very much as Lord Randolph Churchill found delight in baiting Mr. Gladstone.

A very different kind of man is the chief debater of the Opposition side—Sir William Harcourt. Mr. Chamberlain uses the sharp blade of invective. Sir William wields a slogging hammer. Colossal, elephantine, his coat buttoned awkwardly, Sir William is always raising his elbows while addressing the Chamber, and thrusting out his arms as if the coat were too tight about the shoulders and he wanted freedom. He is hoarse and clears his throat in every sentence. His notes are written on scraps of paper, many-sized. When he wants to quote, he can rarely find the quotation. "Well, it amounts to this," he will say, and proceed to paraphrase. In the middle of the paraphrase he will stop, rummage again among his papers, and exclaim, "Here it is!" and then start to read. You never get any shuffling like that from Mr. Chamberlain.

The first quarter of an hour Sir William is a trial to patience. He is dull; he is ponderous; he rambles. But all

this time he is "getting up steam." The voice gradually loses its huskiness. The irritating clearing of the throat ceases. On the broad, mobile features there comes the glow of animation. There is the kindling of fire in his words. And then he starts pummelling the Tories with amused scorn and extravagant simile. When the word passes to the smoking-room, the tea-room and the lobby that "Harcourt is up and in good form," there is a scamper back to the House, and the dull green benches are soon crowded. He makes his foe turn red and uncomfortable. But never, like Mr. Chamberlain, does he make him squirm. He will awaken the Radicals into applause. But there is ever a touch of mirth in the yell. The whole house chortles at his humor. He himself chortles, becomes as pink as a peony, and sometimes has a difficulty in giving the joke a safe delivery. No one knows better than himself when he is about to say a good thing. When it is particularly good he turns round from the table, faces his friends on the Opposition benches, and, opening his arms, booms the humor. When he has convulsed everybody there, he wheels round, purple-faced, and smiles expansively on the Tories.

Both Mr. Chamberlain and Sir William Harcourt know all the rules of the Parliamentary game. Neither is above straining a tactical point, if to his advantage. Mr. Balfour, though Leader of the House, doesn't know the game. He has never taken the trouble to become thoroughly acquainted with it. He can rarely make a statement on the course of public business without being prompted by somebody from behind. Yet you will search the House through and find no one who is so loved by all, even the Saxon-hating Irishmen, as is Arthur James Balfour. I have heard men complain of degeneracy in House of Commons manners. But if in the past they were more dig-

nified and courteous than now-a-times, it is in Mr. Arthur Balfour that we see the link. He is gracious, kindly, transparent. And it is because of this, and not because of either statesmanship or political longsightedness, that his position as Leader is as secure as anything in this world can be.

Mr. Balfour's manner in the House is the delight of the caricaturist. Long and lanky in figure, and with the softened countenance of the dreamy philosopher rather than of the persistent politician, he enters the House giving indications that he is bored. He doesn't sit; the caricaturists allege that he sprawls. He slides his slim body forward until he is really resting on the small of his back; he sticks his feet upon the table and humps up his knees. He yawns frequently, and rarely tries to hide it.

When he has to explain the course of business, the face of Sir William Walrond, Chief Government Whip, is a study in anxiety. It is the same when he has to introduce a new measure and unfold its principles. The impression he leaves on the mind of the listener unfamiliar with the House of Commons and its Leader, is that he has just glanced through the bill after lunch, and that he has a rough and not very accurate idea what it is all about. He leans his elbows on the chest; he turns to those behind him for guidance; he is obviously confused. Now and then his mistakes rouse a good-natured titter. But the House recalls his famous phrase, "I am a child in these matters."

There is, however, a ring in Mr. Balfour's voice, a conviction in his gesture, that captivates the House. Slim, his long body bent, his long arms stretched out, his fingers twitching—a Cecil mannerism, noticeable in his uncle, the Prime Minister, and his cousin, Lord Hugh Cecil—the color of hot argument strong on his cheek, he

is a dramatic figure, full of supine energy, lacking nothing in intellectual alertness.

Yet it is not his prepared speeches, his set orations, that stir the House most. He is at those times tied by his notes. He doesn't "let himself go." Like all Scots, he delights, when arguing, in the splitting of hairs. You see the cleverness of it all; you see the Ministerialists seize point by point and drive it home with a cheer. When it is all over, however, you do not hear men say, "He has put quite a new complexion on the whole thing."

To have Mr. Balfour at his best is to hear him when he speaks without preparation, when something has been said on the other side which nettles and angers him. Many a time does he saunter languidly into the House while a dragging debate is in progress. Lackadaisically he lies back on the Treasury bench, lifts up a small blotting-pad, and with stylographic pen, begins writing. Every now and then he raises his head and looks with curious glance across the floor at some man who is haranguing rampantly. He goes on with his writing. Something else attracts his attention, and he looks up again. Then he puts the unfinished letter away in a little red dispatch-box, throws his head back, gazes wide-eyed at the roof, and occasionally runs his long fingers across his chin.

Suddenly his chance comes. He springs to the table; he seizes the tag-end of the other man's talk as his reason for interposing. Then, with nothing but the spur of the moment as incentive, he plunges into really stirring speech. You know his brain is aflame, for the words come tumbling a little faster than he can conveniently give them utterance. He is serious, he is satirical, he catches the humorous side and pours forth ridicule. Ridicule kills. And it is these hap-hazard brain-hot speeches of Mr. Balfour's that crystal-

lize, in a short thirty minutes, all the talk of the previous hours.

The lot of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, nominal Leader of the Opposition, is not a happy one. To many men the holding of such an office would be an honorable joy. But to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman it is neither an honor nor a joy. There is a lot of independent thought, and not a little individual jealousy, among the Opposition, and men with strong views are more inclined to maintain them publicly than sink differences and obey the main duties of an Opposition—to oppose the Ministry. One of the things that retard the success of his leadership is his name. All popular public men have names that slip easily from the tongue. "Campbell-Bannerman" is too big a mouthful, and the shortening of it into two letters "C.-B." suggests familiarity without a background of respect.

He is exceedingly sensitive. When the long figure of Mr. Balfour is stretched across the table, heaping scorn upon C.-B.'s "qualified" opinions, it is easy to see how uncomfortable C.-B. is. He twists in his seat; at the hardest hits he gives a quick screw of the chin; he is constantly pulling at his knuckles; whilst addressing the House he gives you the impression of having to pump every word out with an effort. Yet he has the saving grace of "pawky" humor. With his head hung slightly on one side, while his fingers rest gently on the table before him, he can say amusing things with a solemn face. And of the men I have mentioned—indeed, of all the men on the two front benches—he is the most human. When there is a graceful tribute to be paid, a few words of sympathy to be said, he has no equal. His short speeches last session on the assassination of the King of Italy and on the death of the Duke of Coburg were from the heart, and appealed to

the heart of every one who listened.

In hard contrast is Mr. Asquith. Frigid, unemotional, lawyer-minded, with full-toned voice and vigorous, compact speech, he is marked out for being the future Liberal Prime Minister of England, were it not that his unsympathetic manner makes him unpopular with the rank and file of his party. He is admired and cheered; but how many care for him personally? He is a trenchant debater, the strongest man undoubtedly on the Opposition side. The thin, satisfied smile that he wears shows he is fully acquainted with the fact. He is the successor to Disraeli as a phrase-maker. His sentences are polished and they are apt. Listening to him, however, you can never shake away the thought, "What a clever lawyer!"

A companion of his on the front Opposition bench to whom the eye and the mind frequently wander is Sir Edward Grey. With boyish face, pouting lips, wavy black curl on forehead—a really good-looking fellow—he somehow seems out of place on that bench, alongside stout, ageing and scant-haired politicians. Fly-fishing is the real business of his life, and politics an evening hobby. He speaks with a quiet, undemonstrative insistence, usually running a finger along the pattern of the brass-work of the chest which serves as elbow-lean, unfolding his views as a traveller would when tracing a new railway route on the map. He is a sound man. He gave evidence of this ten years ago. Political friends expected much from him. They are still in expectation.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Chancellor of the Exchequer, is as long as Mr. Balfour in inches, and as thin, grizzily bearded, with questioning, yellow-lashed eyes, and a tongue with a rasp in it, but never a firework in his speech. He has much about him of the old

Tory squire, and not an ounce of the political opportunist. He is brusque, and he snarls out his thoughts when he is ill-tempered. But he is high-principled, consistent, knowing exactly the road he is on, contemptuous of shilly-shallying, and, the story goes, well able to use expressive Anglo-Saxon in private when some of his *confrères* want to make too big a dip into the public purse, of which he holds the strings. Now and then when the debate is dull, Ministers unbend, loll on their elbows towards each other, and chat and joke, and idle an hour away. They take things easily, and stick their feet on the table. Sir Michael never unbends, and he never puts his feet on the table. You would think him unsociable. He crooks his legs beneath him, with knees pushed far forward; his hands lie idly in his lap. He just looks at the wall and blinks.

Lord George Hamilton is another man who doesn't talk. He gets pieces of paper, folds them into squares and triangles, then tears them into very small pieces and makes paper snowstorms. You can tell how long the Secretary for India has been in the House by the quantity of strewn paper on the floor.

There is Mr. Wyndham. Being Under-Secretary for War, South Africa gave him his chance. For years he was looked upon as an exceedingly handsome, well-dressed dandy, with an affected manner—a man who knew a little about soldiering and a great deal about literature. Yet he has eaten hot sand fighting dervishes at the back of Suakim, and he has proved that he is more than a dilettante historian. The sterling qualities of the man shone out from the instant political responsibility came his way. He is still the hazel-eyed, exquisitely-groomed young man, and the cause of many remarks in the Ladies' Gallery. But his high-pitched, affected style disappeared as soon as

he obtained a place on the Treasury bench. He can make a string of military details interesting. He appreciates argument on the other side. But behind his dulcet voice and dandy ways there is decision and there is strength.

We shall have lively times in this new Parliament, and the Irishmen will largely provide them. They are an emotional, tempestuous crowd of Celts. And yet their leader, Mr. John Redmond, is neither emotional nor tempestuous. He is as phlegmatic as an Irishman can be. He sits in the top corner of the benches below the gangway, where he has the whole House before him. Rather short, rather stout, he has Napoleonic features, and is inclined to force his hand within his waistcoat, frown, and strike Napoleonic attitudes. His speeches are florid, and always end with the same peroration. The Shakespearian quotation of "ministering to a mind diseased" has done him service these twenty years.

On the bench immediately in front of him is Mr. T. M. Healy. Mr. John Dillon has it when "Tim" is away, but as they are not friends he slips along the bench on his approach, and the gesticulatory but good-natured Mr. Swift McNeill plays the part of buffer. Saturnine and caustic, standing with his hands behind his back and his head hanging forward, his big eyes showing through thick-glass spectacles, Mr. Healy is vinegary, stinging, frequently vindictive. He never has notes, and it is impossible to tell whether his speeches are prepared or impromptu. He drones in monotone with always a curl of the lip, and he says entertaining but vitriolic things as he would say, "It is a rainy afternoon."

John Dillon is all emotion. A big man, wearing ill-fitting clothes, pale-faced, sad-eyed, with tufty black

whiskers covering a long jaw, his hair straight, plastered over his forehead, he is an ideal-looking conspirator. He is deadly in earnest, and has not a laugh in him. Everything is "nothing short of an outrage"—his favorite phrase. He is as close an attender in the House as the Speaker himself. The Chamber may be a wilderness; the talk may be on a subject that cannot interest him; but there he always is, through the dreary hours, night after night. If they gave medals in Parliament for regular attendance, Mr. Dillon would win easily.

An unusual figure that flits abashed about the Ministerial benches is Mr. Lecky. He is a learned man out of place. The atmosphere of St. Stephen's does not agree with him. Gaunt and ungainly, never knowing what to do with his hands, but carrying them up against his breast so that they look like seal's flippers, especially as he often wears black kid gloves, he wanders about the Lobby the very picture of disconsolateness. He advances to his place in the House with a long undulation of body almost swanlike. His voice is sweet, but apologetic, as though he would rather not have to speak at all. He blushes; he offers his views timidly; his manner is that of a nervous curate rather staggered at his own audacity in addressing a diocesan synod.

There is no nervousness about another well-known figure—Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett. Here you have full-blooded assurance. Portly, rubicund, with a glaring eye, that flashes through a monocle, demonstrative and leathern-lunged, his hair falling in streaks across his heated forehead, he wraps himself in a mental Union Jack, and thunders at the Government for dilatoriness in cutting the claws of the Russian bear. Above everything he is patriotic. Yet no man is treated so unkindly. When Ashmead-Bartlett

rises, the House recognizes a fitting time to go and smoke cigars downstairs. Ministers regard him with indifference; still he is not crushed. He will ask twenty pertinent questions from the Minister-in-charge. The Minister-in-charge yawns, but offers not a word.

Another man with no nervousness, chock-block full of blunt egotism and breezy confidence, is the member for Battersea. Everybody likes John Burns. Stiff-set, muscular, strong-faced, with bright eyes shelved by heavy shrubs of eyebrows, he is always cheery and dogmatic, knows exactly what he wants, and asks for it in a voice so strident that the invalids in St. Thomas's Hospital across the river must often be disturbed in their early slumbers. Unlike some other trade leaders, he wears neither frock-coat nor silk hat. He drinks no alcohol and he doesn't smoke. He gets two pounds a week from the Engineers' Society for representing them in Parliament. He earns his money. He is afraid of nobody—has enemies outside the House, but none in it—and he says what he thinks, and often what other people think and are afraid to say. Whatever his views, he is straight. He doesn't trim. Nobody has ever alleged that he made money by being a professional agitator. He is honest and fights fair. But he strikes hard. So in politics his personal friends are not limited to the Opposition.

In the new Parliament the "Stranger" will miss many old faces. Mr. Goschen, gray, dour, guttural, all corners, a remarkable man, has left the Treasury bench. Sir Wilfrid Lawson no longer sits scribbling doggerel on the backs of envelopes. The loss of the pleasant, quaint-phrased incursions of Mr. Augustine Birrell is distinctly felt. But there are young men, newly elected, all ready to try their powers. There is Mr. Winston Churchill, the

famous son of a famous father, from whom great things are expected; there is Mr. Gilbert Parker, the brilliant novelist; there is Mr. Henry Norman, traveller and journalist; and a good many more all eager for the fray. We will not include Mr. William O'Brien or Mr. Keir Hardie in this category; St. Stephen's is no new ground to them. If the prophecies come true, Mr. O'Brien will be the centre of some lively scenes when he takes the floor, with his critic Mr. "Tim" Healy within arm's-length.

Fall Mall Magazine.

John Foster Fraser.

NICHOLAS II.

The double eagle of thy crest
Looks either way, for sign
The Empires of the East and West,
Past and to come, are thine.
To thee their hundred millions bow,
Whom next to God they fear;
But he is very far: and thou
Most awful and most near,—

A haughty claim, which, truth to tell,
Yon gentle face belies;
No lowering threat of knout or cell
Dwells in those dreaming eyes.
A poet this whom Fate's caprice
Earth's proudest Monarch made;
A mild-voiced angel, preaching peace,
Though girt with Michael's blade.

When such a voice a truce declares,
What power should cross his will?
No less, o'erburdened Europe wears
Her heavy armor still;
And borne on all the winds that blow,
And gay with flaunted death,
A hundred swaying banners go,
Their silent hosts beneath.

For though we know thee high of heart,
Stern-willed and ardent-souled,
Captive of giant powers thou art,
Too mighty for thy hold.
Slowly the enormous glacier moves,
But with resistless force;
And grinding through its rocky grooves,
Or finds, or makes, a course.

Even with such slow, deliberate pace,
Hath Russia's Empire grown;

Even so her noiseless steps erase
All landmarks but her own.
Trace the dark story of her Kings,
Her sombre annals read,
And see what bitter harvest springs
From slavery's poisoned seed.

See where, 'twixt loathing and desire,
The Imperial wanton stands,
To watch her strangled lord expire
In Orloff's savage hands!
See Peter living fountains quaff
To slake his tiger mood;
Or Ivan's iron-pointed staff
Wet with his first-born's blood.

So the long tale of crime and fraud
Goes on from age to age;
No record here but bears one broad,
Red smear across the page:
To those last fatal lines that tell,
In letters yet undried,
How, slain by those he loved too well,
Thy noble grandsire died.

For only Freedom's self can trust
Her subjects to be free;
Who rules besotted natures must
Or King or martyr be.
So fierce a child Oppression bore,
The startled sire afraid
Recolled, like Frankenstein, before
The monster that he made.

And shall thy single life redeem
That heritage of hate,
Or one weak arm turn back the stream,
The hurrying stream of Fate?
Shall man lay down the useless steel
And all the conflicts cease,
And our disbanded warriors kneel
Before the Prince of Peace?

Ah! little of the way they note,
Nor what its perils are,
Who towards a Bethlehem so remote
Follow so faint a star.
To us, on nearer journeyings set,
A hopeless quest it seems:
A breath, a dream, perhaps, and yet—
Who doth not love such dreams?

Edward Sydney Tylee.

The Spectator.

THE WARDEN OF THE MARCHES.

BY SYDNEY C. GRIER.

VIII.

WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION.

Hark! what was that? Mabel sprang up in bed, her heart beating furiously, her hands clammy with fear. The sound of horses' feet, the rattling of bridles, on every side! A wild impulse seized her to creep under the dressing-table—to hide herself anywhere, but in a moment she laughed, remembering that the last thing before going to bed, Dick had told her for her comfort that not only would the usual Sikh sentry keep guard over the Commissioner's slumbers but that the compound would be patrolled all night by the Khemistan Horse. She crept to the window, and peered out between the slats of the venetians. Yes, there they were—splendid men with huge turbans, and weapons glittering in the moonlight—pacing slowly to and fro upon their stout little horses. But how was it that there were two of them at that far corner of the compound where she could scarcely distinguish their figures, and why had they paused as though to listen for something? Mabel listened too, and presently above the nearer noises of trampling hoofs and jingling bits, she heard the tread of a galloping horse. Was it a scout coming in to give warning of a threatened attack? But no, the two men at the corner sat motionless on their horses, and as the sound came nearer and nearer, she saw the flash of their swords. They were saluting—whom or what? Mabel strained her eyes to see, but could distinguish nothing. Then she remembered. It was General Keeling to

whom they were doing honor, as he rode his nightly rounds, watchful for the safety of his old province. A cold sweat broke out all over her, and in a panic, of which she was heartily ashamed even at the moment, she scurried back to bed, and gave herself up to recurring paroxysms of horror. Of what use were sentinels against such a visitant as this? Suppose he chose to come closer, up to the house, to enter? What was more likely? She lifted her head for a moment and listened again. Surely that was a horse's tread upon the drive coming up to the door? In reality it was only one of the patrol, but in Mabel's condition of ungovernable terror this did not occur to her, and she buried her head under the bed-clothes, and screamed.

Her ayah, roused from her heavy slumbers by her mistress's shrieks, came shivering to her side and tried to quiet her, but finding her entreaties of no avail, ran for help. Presently Georgia glided in, looking like a reproachful ghost herself, in a white dressing-gown, and proffered Mabel three tabloids and a glass of water, as sternly as if she had been Queen Eleanor handing Rosamund the poison.

"I'll sit 'by you till you are asleep," she whispered, "but you mustn't make such a noise. You'll wake the Commissioner, and he has only just dropped off to sleep, poor man!"

"I know I'm a fearful baby," confessed Mabel, restored to sanity by the eminently practical nature of Georgia's benevolence, "but I was so horribly frightened. Is poor Mr. Burgrave very bad?"

"It was a nasty accident," replied Georgia, with professional caution.

"What have you done to him?"

"Strapped up the broken ribs, and applied ice to the leg and slung it up."

"Ugh, cruel creature! ice this cold night? I suppose it's because you hate him so much."

"Hate him? What nonsense! How could we hate a man who has got hurt in trying to save you? He's so brave about it, too."

"And he didn't mind having you for a doctor?"

"Of course I was only helping Dr. Tighe. But even if Mr. Burgrave disliked my being there, he wouldn't show it. When Dr. Tighe told him he had better stay in this house until the splint is taken off, and not run the risk of jarring the limb, he looked at me, and said, 'If my presence is not too troublesome to my kind surgeon here.'"

"And smiled at you like a father. I know," said Mabel, with sleepy sarcasm. "Georgie," she roused herself suddenly, "I want to know—how is—"

"Now I will not answer another question to-night," said Georgia resolutely. "I am going to read to you till you go to sleep."

When Mabel awoke in the morning she felt like one oppressed by an intolerable burden. Body and mind seemed to be alike tired out, and it was an effort even to open her eyes. Georgia and Dr. Tighe were in the room, looking at her, and the sight of them reminded her that there was something she wanted to ask, but she could not remember what it was.

"Well, Miss North," said Dr. Tighe, "nerves a bit jumpy this morning, eh? We'll allow you a day in bed to settle them a little, but after that you must get up and help Mrs. North to look after her patient."

"Oh, I'll get up to-day," said Mabel faintly.

"No, no; don't be in too great a hurry.

Your brother will come in to ask you a question or two in a few minutes, and afterwards you shall try what a little more sleep and a little more slumber will do for you. It's quite evident that nature never meant you for a frontiers-woman."

"Oh, doctor," expostulated Georgia, "think what she has gone through since she came here, and only out from home such a short time! Besides, nothing so bad as the affair of yesterday has ever happened in this neighborhood before."

"At any rate, it's the sort of thing you want to take to young if you're to shine in it," said the doctor. "Life in these parts is not exactly pretty, but it has its exciting moments. Nothing like what it was once, though. My predecessor, under General Keeling, used to head cavalry charges and take forts in the intervals of his medical duties. I have no pleasant little recreations of that sort for my leisure hours. Now, Miss North, don't you dare to laugh at the thought of my heading a cavalry charge. There was some object in training in those days, but naturally one puts on weight when there is nothing to do but potter about a hospital."

"You see you're not the only person in the world who hankers after thrilling experiences, Mab," said Georgia, as she left the room with the doctor, and the words recalled to Mabel their conversation of three weeks since. Stretching out her hand she took a mirror from the toilet table and glanced at herself in it, only to drop the glass in horror. What a hollow-eyed wreck she looked! Was it possible that one day could work such a change? She had had her wish and seen realities, and she recoiled from the sight.

"On the whole, I think I prefer the pleasing fictions of ordinary English life," she said to herself.

"Good-morning, Mab," said Dick's voice. "I'm not going to disturb you long, but I want you to tell the doctor

and me what you can remember about last night's business. It's necessary for me to know, or I wouldn't bother you."

With a shudder Mabel let her thoughts return to that homeward ride for a moment, then looked up suddenly. "Oh, now I remember," she said. "My head is so stupid, I couldn't think of it before. How is Mr. Brendon?"

Both men had expected her to ask after the Commissioner, and Brendon's name took them by surprise. "Brendon? Oh, he's—he's all right," said Dr. Tighe hastily, recovering himself first.

"But how could he be all right? His arm must have been nearly cut off. He fell down under the horses' feet. Oh, you don't mean—he can't be—"

The silence was a sufficient answer, and she let her head fall back on the pillow with a moan. Brendon dead—for whom her kindest feeling the evening before had been a more or less good-natured contempt—and he had practically given his life for her!

"Look here, Mab," said Dick earnestly, "it won't do the poor fellow any good to cry over him just now. What we want is evidence to convict the villains who did it."

"Have you caught them?" came in a muffled voice from the bed.

"I hope so. Winlock, who went out to track them last night, had his own ideas on the subject, and posted part of his detachment in hiding among the rocks around Dera Gul. A little before dawn three men rode up, coming from Nalapur way—not from our direction—but they and their horses were all dead-beat. Winlock arrested them, feeling pretty certain that they were the men we wanted, and had made a long round before turning homewards to avert suspicion. They were Bahram Khan's servants, sure enough, but he said they had been to Nalapur for him, and he offered no objection to their

being arrested. When you are better we must see if you can identify any of them, but now all I want is to know roughly what happened, on account of the—inquiry which must take place to-day."

Thus encouraged, Mabel told her tale, helped out by questions from Dick, but breaking down more than once. He took down what she said, and the doctor signed it as a witness, and then they left her to Georgia's ministrations. Georgia found her patient excited and tearful, and sent Rahah at once to the surgery to make up a composing draught.

"Now, Mab, lie down and try to be quiet," she said.

"No, I won't lie down. I can't sleep," cried Mabel. "Isn't it dreadful, my having to identify those men? I can't bear to think of it, and it brings it all back so vividly—the horrible helplessness—I could do nothing—*nothing*—to save myself. I think I should have gone mad in another moment if Mr. Anstruther had not come up. And now to have to go and look at them in cold blood, and say that I know them again! Isn't there any way out of it? Oh, Georgie, can't Dick make my syce turn Queen's evidence?"

"I'm afraid not," said Georgia reluctantly. "The fact is, Mab, your syce didn't wait to be arrested. He went off while we were at the picnic."

"Oh, well," said Mabel despairingly, "then I must do it, I suppose. It seems a kind of duty, as poor Mr. Brendon was killed in trying to save me, to have his murderers punished. But it's awful to think that three men will be hanged just because I recognized them. They will be hanged, won't they?"

"I don't know, really. It is very dreadful, Mab, but there is one good thing about the whole affair. It may save the frontier. Both Dick and I think that Bahram Khan was so confident of Mr. Burgrave's support, that

he ventured on this outrage, feeling sure that he would see him through. If these three men are proved to be his agents, it must open the Commissioner's eyes. He's an Englishman, and an honorable man, though dreadfully mistaken, and he can't go on favoring him after that. In fact, I'm sure he wouldn't want to."

"No. I don't think he would. And I suppose there is no question about it really? What do other people think?"

"None of the men here have a doubt that it was Bahram Khan's doing. As for the regiment, they are so indignant over the insult offered to Dick in attempting to carry off his sister, that they would like to raze Dera Gul to the ground forthwith."

"Oh, that's the light in which they look at it? They don't think of my feelings in the matter at all?"

"I'm afraid not. You and I are merely Dick's chattels in their eyes, you see."

"I may be, but you are not. My ayah Tara tells me all sorts of wonderful things about you, Georgie, which she picks up from the servants. Do you know that when you kiss Dick before he starts in the morning, they think you are setting a spell upon him to keep him safe all day, and bring him back to you all right at night?"

Georgia blushed like a girl. "That is really rather sweet," she said. "Rahah despises the people round here too much to tell me anything they say about us."

"Oh, Georgie!" cried Mabel, with sudden envy. "I wish I cared for any one as you do for Dick! You look quite different when you talk about him. If only I wasn't such a cold-hearted wretch! I wish I had cared for poor Mr. Brendon, even; that would be better than caring for no one but myself."

She broke into a storm of tearless sobs, and Georgia hailed the appear-

ance of Rahah with the sleeping draught, which she had to administer almost by force. It was some time in taking effect, but at last the sobs died away, and she was able to leave the patient in charge of her own ayah, while she went about her other duties. Not until the morning of the next day did Mabel wake again, very much ashamed of her behavior, which she was conscious had not been exactly in accordance with the high aspirations she had confided to Georgia. Resolved to redeem her character, she sprang out of bed at once, and when Georgia came into her room on tiptoe, expecting to find her asleep, she was already dressed.

"Let me do something to help you," she said eagerly. "You must have had a fearful amount of extra work thrown on you yesterday. What can I do?"

"Well, if you are so benevolently inclined, you might sit with the Commissioner a little," said Georgia. "He was asking for you all day, and rather suspected us of concealing something dreadful from him."

"Very well," said Mabel readily. The proposal fell in delightfully with her wishes, for she had conceived a magnificent idea while dressing. By her diplomacy she would induce the Commissioner to reverse his frontier policy.

"Miss North!" Mr. Burgrave started up from his pillows as Mabel entered the sick-room, but becoming suddenly conscious of his injuries, sank back again stiffly. "Excuse my left hand," he added. "The other is off work just now. And how are you? Really not much the worse?"

"I had no business to be any the worse," returned Mabel. "Nothing happened to me, thanks to you and—the others."

"Ah, but the shock to the nerves must have been exceedingly severe," said Mr. Burgrave soothingly. "As I remarked to Tighe yesterday, Mrs. North

would have got over anything of the kind in an hour or two, but you are much more highly strung."

Mabel was vaguely aware that the comparison was intended to be all in her favor, but she could not agree that the advantage was on her side, and she changed the subject hastily. "I don't know how to thank you for what you did. Every time I think of that evening I feel more and more how grateful I ought to be. And I am, indeed, but I can't say what I should like."

Mr. Burgrave raised his hand. "Please don't, Miss North, or you will make me more miserable than I am already. How can I forget that I did nothing to help you? Mr. Anstruther had that happiness, while I was lying on the ground under my horse."

"But you tried—you did all you could—you were so terribly hurt," protested Mabel.

"Yes, and that is my only comfort. I was hurt, and therefore I am here. No, on second thoughts, I don't even envy Anstruther. He did the work, but I have basely annexed the reward. To have rescued you was enough for him. I, who was unsuccessful, am consoled by finding myself under the same roof with you for a fortnight. That is enough for me."

"How nice of you to say so!" Mabel rose. "Then I can leave you quite happily, and go and help Georgia?"

"Miss North, you are not going already? What have I said to drive you out of the room? Do you want me to pine away in melancholy madness? After all, I did try to rescue you, as you were kind enough to say just now, but it will need your constant society and conversation to keep me from brooding over my failure."

"I'm afraid my society won't be very cheerful," said Mabel resuming her seat with a sigh. "You see I can't help feeling that what happened was a good

deal my fault. If I had only told what I knew—"

"Well?" asked Mr. Burgrave anxiously as she paused.

"Ah, but if I had you would not have believed it," was the unexpected response, "any more than you would now."

"Do you think I should be so rude as to question your word, Miss North?"

"You will when I tell you I know that the men who tried to carry me off were agents of Bahram Khan's."

"You have evidence to support this very serious allegation, I presume? Are you able to identify the men?"

"I suppose so; I haven't tried. But, Mr. Burgrave, I am going to tell you something that only my sister-in-law knows—not even my brother, for I wouldn't let her say anything to him. Bahram Khan did want to—to marry me."

"What?" cried the Commissioner, starting up again; "you don't mean to say that he has ever ventured to—to suggest such a thing to you?" Rage and distrust strove for the mastery in his voice.

"Oh, no; he has never said anything to me, but the day I was at Dera Gul the women talked of nothing else."

"Oh, the women!" Mr. Burgrave spoke quite calmly again, and with evident relief. "You must remember that Bahram Khan is a good deal more advanced in his notions than the other chiefs of the province, and would like to imitate our ways with regard to ladies—English ladies, I mean. That is just the sort of thing that native women can't understand. Any polite attention he might offer you would be misconstrued by them into a cause for violent jealousy. Their mistake made things extremely unpleasant for you at the moment, no doubt, but you need not torment yourself with thinking that he had any such preposterous idea in his head."

Mr. Burgrave did not actually say that a lady accustomed to universal admiration was liable to perceive it even where it did not exist, but this was what Mabel understood his slightly repressive tone to imply, and she grew crimson.

"Why don't you say that I imagined the whole thing?" she demanded. "It's not an experience I am proud of, I assure you. I told it you purely in the hope that it might open your eyes a little, but since you prefer to regard Bahram Khan as an interesting martyr—"

"Pray, don't mistake me, Miss North. If I believed that Bahram Khan had devised this dastardly plot against you I would hunt him down like a bloodhound until he was delivered up to justice, though that would mean the death of all my hopes for this frontier. In one way, of course, it would simplify matters a good deal. I am not in the habit of bothering ladies with politics, but there can be no harm in saying that it gives me great pain to differ from a man I respect as I do your brother. He has done so much for the frontier that it seems almost presumption in me to set my opinion above his. However, I have formed that opinion after long and careful study of the Khemistan problem, and only the very strongest proof that I had been mistaken could induce me to alter it. But if you should identify Bahram Khan's servants as your assassins, it would be conclusive evidence that he is not the man I take him to be."

"And then you would see that Dick was right, and leave him to manage things in his own way?"

"My dear Miss North, we are now soaring into the domain of improbabilities. If my opinion were once modified, it is possible that your brother's view might prevail, or again, it might not."

"I am certain he would not be sorry if Bahram Khan was proved untrustworthy," was Mabel's mental comment. "It would show him a way out of his difficulty. And now I shall be able to do it."

Mabel was particularly cheerful all the rest of the day, as indeed she had a right to be, for had she not just secured the safety of the frontier? Warned by her experience of the morning, she made no further attempt to entrap Mr. Burgrave into a political discussion, but contented herself with showing in numberless little ways her gratitude for the concession he was prepared to make. She even welcomed his offer to introduce her to the beauties of Browning, a poet whose works she had been wont to regard with the mingled alarm and dislike which, in the case of a modern young lady, can only spring from ignorance of them.

He sent a servant back to the bungalow he had occupied to fetch the two portly volumes which, as he told her, always formed a part of his travelling library, and she read aloud to him without a murmur a considerable portion of "Paracelsus." Under the combined influence of the poetry he liked best and the reader's voice, the Commissioner forgot alike his injuries and the difficulties which beset his policy, and the household fairly basked in his smiles. This, at least, was what Fitz Anstruther said, but he had happened to intrude upon the reading, and was adversely affected by the peaceful scene.

The next morning, as Dick was going to his office, Mabel intercepted him in the veranda. "I am ready to identify those men as soon as you like, Dick," she said.

He looked at her in surprise. "Wouldn't you rather wait until you have recovered a little from the shock?" he asked.

"Oh no, I'm all right now. I should like to get it over, Dick."

"Well, you certainly seem to have picked up wonderfully. I suppose there's no doubt of your knowing them again?"

Mabel shuddered. "How could I help recognizing them? The red light and those awful faces—it seems as if the whole thing was photographed on my mind. I should know them anywhere."

"Oh, all right. It would be far worse, you know, to try to identify them and fall than to let the thing go altogether."

"You needn't be afraid. Only I should be glad not to have to look forward to it much longer."

"Very well. No doubt it's better to do it before the impression has a chance of fading from your mind. It's a bother about the Commissioner, though. He insists on being present, and Georgie and Tighe say he mustn't on any account be allowed to move until they have wired his knee. We shall have to carry his bed out on the veranda, I suppose. Just like him to think the show can't go on without him. Of course he's afraid we shall contrive to bring his precious *protégé* in guilty in some underhand way."

Mabel smiled as Dick went down the steps, for she knew better than he did. Mr. Burgrave's anxiety was not so much for Bahram Khan personally as for his own schemes, and not so much for them as for the continuance of his friendship with the North family.

This knowledge, and the pleasing conviction that she alone possessed it, sustained her when she was summoned in the afternoon to identify her three surviving assailants.

"Come along," said Dick, entering the drawing-room; "they're all here, and Tighe has superintended the removal of the distinguished patient.

They're in the veranda outside his room. Don't be frightened, Mab. Georgia shall come too and support you."

In spite of her resolution, Mabel trembled a little as she entered the improvised police-court, realizing once more what issues hung upon her words. Fitz was there, and a Hindu clerk, and the Commissioner propped up in bed. Before them stood a dozen natives with turbans and clothes of various degrees of picturesque dirt and raggedness, guarded by as many dismounted troopers who were armed to the teeth.

"Now, Mab, pick 'em out," murmured Dick, from behind his sister.

"But there are too many men here. There were only three," objected Mabel in a hasty whisper.

"Well, and you have to tell us which they were. You didn't think we were going to show you the three prisoners and invite you to swear to them, did you? Now don't waste the time of the court."

Absolute despair seized upon Mabel as she walked down the line of men, and looked shrinkingly into their faces. How was it possible that so many natives, differing presumably in origin and circumstances, could be so much alike? Not one of them blanched under her timid scrutiny. Some looked stolid and some bored, and one or two even amused, but this gave her no help. At last, however it struck her that there was something familiar in one or two of the faces. She returned and examined them more carefully, and then looked round at Dick and the rest.

"This man," she said, pointing to one, "and that one, and this."

"You are certain?" asked Mr. Burgrave.

"Yes; I know their faces quite well."

This time an undisguised smile ran momentarily along the line of swarthy

countenances, only to disappear before Dick's frown.

"Take them away," he said to the troopers, and with a clanking of chains here and there, the prisoners and their guard departed.

"What is the matter?" asked Mabel in bewilderment, as she looked from one to the other of the three chagrined faces before her.

"Oh, only that you have identified as your assailants one of the *chaprasis* and a sowar in mufti and the garden-er's son, who were all peacefully going about their lawful business at the time of the outrage," said Dick bitterly.

The Argosy.

"You have made us the laughing-stock of the frontier."

"But—but weren't the real men there?"

"Of course they were, but you passed them over."

"And what will happen to them now."

"They will be discharged for lack of evidence, that's all. Bahram Khan will testify that they had been to Nalapur on an errand for him, and other witnesses will swear that they saw and spoke to them there, and we can say nothing."

(To be continued.)

MY LADY.

'Tis not her kind yet mastering air
Nor is't the glory of her hair,
Nor yet the beauty of her eyes
With the deep look of soft surprise;
'Tis not the wit so often heard
Where wisdom limes each airy word;
'Tis not her humors grave and gay
That give my Lady all her sway.
My dainty Lady's sovereign power
Hangs not upon the passing hour;
The years may roll, and still the same
She is my Lady and my Dame,
My Lady's face, my Lady's voice,
These make my heart and soul rejoice.
And yet they fall full short of all
That keeps me still my Lady's thrall;
The secret why my Lady's reign
Can never turn to change or pain
Is known alike to man and elf,
It is that she is just—Herself!

Walter Herries Pollock.

Longman's Magazine.

LIVING AGE. VOL. X. 551

THE NEGLECT OF MODERN LANGUAGES.

We have every reason to be proud of our colonies, and to look with a contented curiosity to the achievement of Australia's federal Parliament. The richest country in the world still owes us a willing allegiance, and during the last year the bonds have been solidly strengthened. In other words, the branches are growing out from the parent stem as they list; but there is no talk of lopping them off, and the old trunk can still bear the burden of shade and leafage imposed upon it. But the croakers are never satisfied, and despite our good fortune, complaints are heard at every corner. England is in decay, we are told. Her trains are slower than anybody else's; her trade is gone; she cannot compete with the newer markets of the world; she is ceasing to bear sons, and her population before long will decrease as rapidly as the population of France. And lastly, says a monger of statistics, even her death-rate is low! Think of that final tragedy and tremble! Englishmen are born with difficulty, and once they come into the world they cannot get out of it with a proper despatch. Now, what is the meaning of these figures and prophecies we do not know. They are chiefly concocted in order that the citizen, used to a daily sensation, may tremble at his breakfast-table, and may amuse himself in the train or omnibus which hustles him to the city, by propounding remedies for imagined evils. It is, no doubt, a pleasant game to play; but in the end it will prove more dangerous than football. If we are falling behind in the race, it were well to recognize it, and provide remedies. But it is not the purpose of the morning papers to improve the country. All these "organs" are concerned to contrive is a hasty

misinformed panic, and we believe that a panic-stricken populace is a greater danger to a State than a declining trade. To revive a trade is not impossible; it is far more difficult to bring back to reason a crazy mob that has lost its head. Nor are our half-penny wiseacres at a loss for a remedy. A dozen fresh ones are suggested every day, until we begin to fear an attack of hysteria. Not long since the French nation woke up to believe in what it termed the Anglo-Saxon superiority, and M. Démolins, among others, asked excitedly whence the superiority was derived. A hasty journey to England convinced him at once. England was superior to France, because two wholly obscure schools were hidden away somewhere in the country. He did not remember, this excellent Frenchman, that England had held her own for some centuries, that many of her great men had been educated at such places as Eton, where the methods of Mr. Squeers ("w-i-n, win, d-e-r, der—win—now go and clean 'em") are not followed. No; the Frenchman pitched on a piece of folly which his own countrymen know not, and said cheerfully that he had discovered the secret of Anglo-Saxon superiority. So it is that our critics are seeking to explain the defeat they suppose inflicted upon England by Franco-German ingenuity. And one gentleman is quite sure that all our woes are due to the neglect of modern languages. Wherefore he has taken up his pen and written to the *Times*—inspired, of course, by Lord Rosebery, who is haunted by more bogeys than any living statesman. Now, Lord Rosebery, having already seen in his mind's eye a French invasion of England, suddenly discovered at Glasgow that our ignorance of

French and German is "a source of real danger to the nation." Well, if that be so, by all means let as many as are destined for the pursuit of commerce learn the magic tongues which are to save the country. The acquisition of modern languages is not impossible; and though their importance may be overrated, though England is not yet perishing for lack of them, there is no reason why those who have the chance of improving their value should neglect it. But there is no reason for panic. Ollendorf never yet turned the current of the world's history and the fervent gentlemen who rushed hurriedly into print might first of all have fortified their case (if any) by a modest inquiry. To begin with, English boys have already as sound an opportunity of learning foreign languages as the French and Germans, who are supposed by Lord Rosebery to be our daily threat. Every boy who goes to a public school is compelled to smatter his brain with French; and if he elect to go upon the modern side, he may add to his attainment a few scraps of German. In this respect he is as fortunate as the youngsters of Paris or Berlin. We have never known a Frenchman—and we have known many—who had picked up as much English at school as would enable him to purchase a package of cigarettes; and the Germans, whose omnipotence seems to make all Europe shudder, are sensible enough to learn their English in London. Moreover, as the English tongue still dominates commerce, we have less cause than the others to travel beyond the bounds of our own speech; and we cannot approve the energy of those who would find in French and German a panacea for our imagined woes. In the first place modern languages must be studied *in situ*. Their acquisition is a matter not of the intelligence but of the ear. Put a boy down in France, force him to ask for what he wants,

let him accustom himself all day long to the sound of French words, and he will speak the language as he speaks his own, expressively perhaps, correctly maybe, but without any relation to its grammatical structure. Of all the Englishmen we have ever heard speak French, by far the most accomplished was a native of Bethnal Green, who probably could not read or write a page of intelligible English. But he was gifted with a true ear and a quick instinct, so that he had but to wander up and down the street to learn the language, a knowledge of which Lord Rosebery says, is to save us from a national peril. Is he one of our saviors, then, or should we give him a place below the professor of mediæval philology who knows the history and structure of all the Romance languages and yet cannot converse with fluency in any tongue save his own? Conversation is well enough, but we imagine that in order to avert the national danger conversation must express something more than the faculty of speech. The mind that can acquire foreign languages is obviously none of the finest; yet if the correspondents of the Times are to be believed, the porter of a foreign hotel is superior in worth to Charles Dickens (let us say) or Benjamin Disraeli.

For the learning of foreign languages, then, two things are necessary—a correct ear and a sojourn abroad. Now, the boy whose ear is dull to sound might as well stay at home; and what parents are they who deem that a knowledge of French or German is sufficient atonement for a foreign education? But, say the enthusiasts, a boy may stay at home and yet learn to talk French, if the proper system be followed. We doubt it; the experiment has had a fair trial and failed; and though every boy may learn a few words at school, we believe that a proper knowledge of foreign lan-

guages must be left to private enterprise. However, there are many who still insist upon "corporate efforts." They appeal to county councils, chambers of commerce, trade-guilds, and finally to our universities. Now, if such bodies as the chambers of commerce believe the project to be practical, by all means let them do their utmost. They know the solid value of French and German far better than the amateurs who air their fads in the newspaper; and maybe an interchange of clerks between the countries might be successful, but we must jealously guard our universities against the encroachment of new and useful studies. In the first place, it is not the business of our universities to avert national perils. It is not their business to help the commercial gentleman to fill his pocket. They stand high above the practical pursuits of buying and selling and money getting. "The universities should not delay any longer," says an enthusiast, "to take their full share in this necessary reform. It is to them we look for guidance and encouragement." The enthusiasts will look, we trust, in vain. The universities exist to pursue knowledge for its own sake, or to provide such training for mind and intelligence as will allow their *alumni* to learn whatever is serviceable to their after-career. They do not exist to fit their pupils for that hideous performance known as "the struggle for life," and despite chairs of agriculture and mechanics, the universities still do their best work in the domain of pure scholarship. But, say the apologists of modern languages, French and German are as valuable instruments of "culture" as Greek and Latin. That depends upon the meaning given to "culture;" but if that odious word denotes anything better than a facility of tea-table conversation, we cannot agree with the apologists. As we have

said, French and German must be acquired by the ear rather than by the intelligence. The structure of the languages being similar to the structure of our own, the grammar follows the vocabulary without difficulty, and the best linguists are generally those who do not analyze the result which their facility produces. The study of Greek and Latin is valuable, not only for the splendid literature to which it is the key; it is valuable also because it accustoms the brain to understand the essence and not the mere words of a sentence; and the student who has mastered the grammar of the so-called dead languages will find his brain trained to any enterprise. An intelligent boy can learn to read French in a few months, while a brief stay in a foreign land will teach him to speak it. Is the accident of travel comparable as an instrument of culture to the systematic study of so beautiful a language as Greek, or the understanding of so logical a means of expression as Latin?

But when the apologists of modern languages unmask their batteries, it is quite clear that their attack is directed against Greek and Latin. Here are the steps in their argument: (1) It is a good thing to learn foreign languages; (2) The universities cannot teach them; (3) Therefore let us abolish Greek. The learned gentlemen whose desire it is to tinker our universities do not see the lapses in the argument. They are so profoundly convinced of their own infallibility that they display a blind rage against the poor dead languages. The Modern Language Association, which met recently, was careful to conceal the object of its attack, but its very cunning renders its purpose the more dangerous. Mr. Milner-Barry, in demanding that "one modern language should be included as a compulsory subject in every university matriculation," declared that he expressly sought to avoid re-opening the Greek

question. Professor Skeat had less scruple; yet even his courage was tempered by a transparent ingenuity. He moved as an amendment "that a modern language should be substituted for a classical language." He pointed out with justice that every new subject was a severe burden on the student, and if a new subject was imposed some part of the old burden should be removed. "They could avoid offence," he added, "by not specifying Greek; they all knew what was meant." Happily offence is not so easily avoided, and the fact that all know what he means will, let us hope, put some at least on their guard.

This attack upon Greek is but a part of the democratization of our universities, and as such should be repelled with energy. The universities, says the practical man, can only justify their existence on the ground of utility. The rich merchant who sends his son to Oxford or Cambridge complains, when the boy comes home, that he is useless in the counting-house, and instead of blaming himself for his own vain folly, he declares that the university has not given him his money's worth. With as much justice he might grumble that Sandhurst was not a proper avenue for the Church, or that barristers did not come forth from Cooper's Hill fully equipped. And the dissatisfied merchant forgets this other truth, that the universities do not seek to please their customers; on the contrary, they are the councils which should make the laws of education and exact obedience to those laws. The greedy parent combines with the anxious reformer to demand that our universities should instruct the young in French and book-keeping. The universities can only make one reply to the greedy parent. Send your son elsewhere, and leave us to do our duty in peace.

For the highest quality of our universities should be their uselessness.

They should guard the privilege of impracticability with reverence. The lamp which has been handed to them from the past, which they will hand presently to a younger generation, burns most brightly when it is least diffused. Even if their *alumni* go forth to the world with their market value decreased, that fact throws no discredit on their teaching. Our colleges have most ably discharged their duty if they have given their pupils a brief insight into the humanities, and have so trained their brains that they may use them intelligently in the enterprises of life. For this purpose the so-called dead languages, with mathematics are the best instruments possible.

The making of scholars is a worthy task which should need no defence. And as for the average boy, who for some reason or other is the pampered favorite of the reformers—he is none the worse if, for once in his life, he is perforce confronted with the most splendid language, the most delicate literature, that human ears have ever listened to. Now, it is obvious that all the boys who go up to our universities cannot grow into scholars. The potter finds broken bits of clay among his pots. And we have known many Englishmen who devoted years to the learning of French and came away from the task with the fine and free accent of Stratford. For the making of one success, indeed, many failures may be necessary, though to fail in the classics is an inestimable privilege; and even Porson and Bentley owed something to the system which it is proposed to abolish. Therefore every encroachment of French and German is a direct attack upon scholarship.

The truth is that if once the modern languages get foothold in our universities, Greek and Latin will be in danger. We have seen enough of reformers, especially university reformers, to

doubt their good faith. To-day they ask that French shall be part of the Little-Go. To-morrow they will explain that their favorite study, if study it may be called, is discouraged, and they will fiercely demand that the highest honors in the university be granted to modern languages. Then we shall have schools and triposes in which marks shall be given, not for sound learning and elegant scholarship, but for facile declamation and the hasty expression of false taste. Papers will be set in Dumas fils, and Heine's influence upon European thought will be discussed by students ill prepared to take a general survey. Even our best scholars may travel along the line of least resistance and find the easy method of obtaining honors the better suited to their indolence.

But, say the champions of French, the average undergraduate learns no Greek and little Latin. Why, then, keep up the farce? Why, indeed? If the average undergraduate be so stupid that the Greek Grammar appals him, let him travel from place to place, and give himself the training appropriate to a *garçon de café*. Let him not use his brain at all; let him be content to patter a foreign tongue, as a parrot learns to swear, by listening to the patter of others. Such a man has as little need of a university as a university has of him. But we do not despair of the average undergraduate as we know him. He may not be profoundly learned; he need not have the keenest appreciation of letters. But under the present system he is efficiently drilled, and at any rate he touches the hem of learning's garment. If he but read one play of Sophocles, if he but scamper through half the "Æneid," he may have gained an insight into literature which no modern language could give him; and if he forgets the words and even the characters of Greek, which to the democrat are so blatant an offence, he

has wandered a year or two in the groves of useless learning.

At present Greek only is in danger, but if Greek be sacrificed, what hope is there for Latin? "Tunc tua res agitur, paries quum proximus ardet," wrote Dr. Mayor, the witty professor of Latin, when the study of Greek was vigorously attacked. And with the best intention in the world, we do not trust the honesty of those who would sacrifice Greek, and yet hold Latin the foundation of all learning. Wherein is Latin more valuable than Greek? Is it because the chemist and druggist reads his prescriptions in dog-Latin, or because the man of science has invented a hideous jargon, which bears a false resemblance to the language which Tacitus wrote? Surely these reasons are insufficient even for the British parent, who wants to see an instant return of ten per cent. on the money spent upon his son's education. And if one or other of the ancient languages must go we would throw Latin overboard with less regret. For Greek, the more beautiful tongue, expresses the more beautiful thoughts. If the understanding of literature and history bear any part in the study of language, then Greek should be strong enough to resist all attacks, for among the Greeks literature first became a fine art. There is no prose, no poetry, that was not invented by the most marvellous people that ever struck a lyre or went forth to battle in the panoply of youth. Homer devised and perfected the epic; Sophocles made the perfect mould of tragedy and broke it; Aristophanes evoked laughter from the clouds, as the savage king draws rain by his enchantment; Thucydides revealed the true grandeur of history's muse. Whatever the Romans wrote or thought, they wrote or thought in mimicry, and happily the genius of the moderns cannot cut itself adrift from the great tradition. Why, then, to please the

apothecary, should Greek be sacrificed to Latin, as it is to be sacrificed to French, to please the commercial traveller? No; Latin and Greek must stand or fall together, and since our universities have nought to do either with commercial travellers or apothecaries, we may still be of good hope that the ancients will win another victory over the moderns.

But the champions of French are more ingenious than fair-minded. Having declared that their hero, the average boy, cannot understand the rudiments of literature, they instantly turn about and declare that French and German are as fine instruments of culture as Latin or Greek. Their position of course is untenable, and their argument wholly disingenuous. Is Villon a better study for the schoolboy than Virgil? Will the youth who is not fit to read Cæsar and Plato profit his soul by construing the splendid page of Pascal or Rabelais? Will he understand the satire of La Bruyère or the reactionary logic of Joseph de Maistre? Even if he could unravel the secret of these masters it would do him but little good. For they do not teach the great lesson of simplicity, which taught by the classics is a lifelong, if unconscious, reward. And the youth who is set to study French will speedily desert the

Blackwood's Magazine.

academic writers for the blameless amusement of Jules Verne, or the less innocent curiosity of the furtive novel. In conclusion, the acquisition of modern languages is a graceful, and maybe (as we are told) a very useful accomplishment. But it is not the business of universities to teach them. If they are to be a discipline, they must be taught on a system, and as Mr. J. Rees, an examiner in modern languages, and a firm believer in the divine right of Latin and Greek, says, "to teach modern languages as these classical tongues are taught is as foolish as to isolate an infant in a tower to see if his first word will be 'Bekos.'" Our scholars may very well be left to learn French and German in their hours of ease, and as for the commercial gents, they must be encouraged by the County Councils and sent to sojourn abroad. Then, and then only, will they be able to avert what Lord Rosebery's amiable pessimism describes as a "national danger," a near companion of General Mercier's phantom fleet. But once French and German, under Professor Skeat's wily auspices, are established firmly in Cambridge and Oxford, the so-called dead languages will be threatened by the last death, and that shall make them dead indeed.

AN ENGLISHWOMAN'S LOVE-LETTERS.

LETTER XXXVI.

Dearest:—Venice is around me as I write! Well, I will not waste my Baedeker knowledge on you—you, too, can get a copy; and it is not the panoramic view of things you will be wanting from me; it is my own particular Venice I am to find out and send you. So, first of all, from the heart of it I

send you mine; when I have kissed you I will go on. My eyes have been seeing so much that is new, I shall want a fresh vocabulary for it all. But mainly I want to say, let us be here again together quickly, before we lose any more of our youth or our two-handed hold on life. I get short of breath thinking of it!

So let it be here, Beloved, that some

of our soon-to-be happiness opens and shuts its eyes; for truly Venice is a sleepy place. I am wanting, and taking, nine hours' sleep after all I do!

Outside, coming over the flats from Padua, she looked something like a manufacturing town at its ablutions—a smoky chimney well to the fore; but get near to her and you find her standing on turquoise, her feet set about with jaspers, and with one of her eyes she ravishes you; and all her campanille are like the "thin flames" of "souls mounting up to God."

That is from without; within she becomes too sensuous and civic in her splendor to let me think much of souls. "Rest and be indolent" is the motto for the life she teaches. The architecture is the song of the lotus-eaters built into stone—were I in a more florid mood I would have said "swan-song," for the whole stands finished with nothing more to be added; it has sung itself out; and if there is a moral to it all, no doubt it is in Ruskin, and I don't want to read it just now.

What I want is you close at hand looking up at all this beauty, and smiling when I smile, which is your way, as if you had no opinions of your own about anything in which you are not a professor. So you will write and agree that I am to have the pleasure of this return to look forward to? If I know that, I shall be so much more reconciled to all the joy of the things I am seeing now for the first time; and shall see so much better the second, Beloved, when your eyes are here helping me.

Here is love, dearest! help yourself to just as much as you wish for; though all that I send is good for you! No letter from you since Florence, but I am neither sad nor anxious; only all the more your loving.

LETTER XXXVII.

Beloved:—The weather is as gray as England to-day, and much rainier. To

feel it on my cheeks and be back north with that and warmer things, I would go out in it in face of protests, and had to go alone—not Arthur even being in the mood just then for a patriotic quest of the uncomfortable. I had myself oared into the lagoons across a racing current and a driving head-wind which made my gondolier bend like a distressed poplar over his oar; patience on a monument smiling at backsheesh—"all comes to him who knows."

Of course, for comfort and pleasure, and everything but economy, we have picked up a gondolier to pet; we making much of him, and he much out of us. He takes Arthur to a place where he can bathe—to use his own expression—"cleanly," that is to say, unconventionally; and this appropriately enough is on the borders of a land called "the Garden of Eden" (being named so after its owners). He—"Charon" I call him—is large and of ruddy countenance, and talks English in blinkers—that is to say, gondola English—out of which he could not find words to summon me a cab even if it were not opposed to his interests. Still there are no cabs to be called in Venice, and he is teaching us that the shortest way is always by water. If Arthur is not punctually in his gondola by 7 A.M., I hear a call for the "Signore Inglese" go up to his window; and it is hungry Charon waiting to ferry him.

Yesterday your friend Mr. C— called and took me over to Murano in a beautiful pair-oared boat that simply flew. There I saw a wonderful apse filled with mosaic of dull gold, wherein is set a blue-black figure of the Madonna, ten heads high and ten centuries old, which almost made me become a Mariolatrist on the spot. She stands leaning up the bend with two pale hands lifted in ghostly blessing. Underfoot the floor is all mosaic; mountainous

with age and earthquakes; the architecture classic in the grip of Byzantine Christianity, which is like the spirit of God moving on the face of the waters, or Ezekiel prophesying to the dry bones.

The Colleoni is quite as much more beautiful in fact and seen full-size as I had hoped from all smaller reproductions. A fine equestrian figure always strikes one as enthroned, and not merely riding; if I can't get that, I consider a centaur the nobler creature with its human body set down into the socket of the brute, and all fire—a candle burning at both ends; which, in a way, is what the centaur means, I imagine?

Bellini goes on being wonderful and for me beats Raphael's Blenheim Madonna period on its own ground. I hear now that the Raphael lady I raved over in Florence is no Raphael at all—which accounts for it being so beautiful and interesting—to me, I hasten to add. Raphael's studied calmness, his soul of "invisible soap and imperceptible water," may charm some; me it only chills or leaves unmoved.

Is this more about art than you care to hear? I have nothing to say about myself, except that I am as happy as a cut-in-half thing can be. Is it any use sending kind messages to your mother? If so, my heart is full of them. Bless you, dearest, and good-night.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Dearest.—St. Mark's inside is entirely different from anything I had imagined. I had expected a grove of pillars instead of these wonderful breadths of wall; and the marble overlay I had not understood at all till I saw it. My admiration mounts every time I enter; it has a different gloom from any I have ever been in, more joyous and satisfying, not in the least moody as our own Gothic seems sometimes to be;

and saints instead of devils look at you solemn-eyed from every corner of shade.

A heavy rain turns the Piazza into a lake; this morning Arthur had to carry me across. Other foolish Englishwomen were shocked at such means, and paddled their own leaky canoes, or stood on the brink and looked miserable. The effect of rain-pool reflections on the inside of St. Mark's is noticeable, causing it to bloom unexpectedly into fresh subtleties and glories. The gold takes so sympathetically to any least tint of color that is in the air, and counts up the altar candles even unto its farthest recesses and cupolas.

I think before I leave Venice I shall find about ten Tintoretto's which I really like. Best of all is that Bacchus and Ariadne in the Ducal Palace, of which you gave me the engraving. His "Marriage of St. Catherine," which is there also, has all Veronese's charm of color and what I call his "breeding;" and in the ceiling of the Council Chamber is one splendid figure of a sea-youth striding a dolphin.

Last evening we climbed the San Giorgio campanile for a sunset view of Venice; it is a much better point of view than the St. Mark's one, and we were lucky in our sunset. Venice again looked like a beautified factory town, blue and blue with smoke and evening mists. Down below in the church I met a delightful Capuchin priest who could talk French, and a poor, very young lay-brother who had the holy custody of the eyes heavily upon his conscience when I spoke to him. I was so sorry for him!

The Mother-Aunt is ill in bed; but as she is at the present moment receiving three visitors, you will understand about how ill. The fact is she is worn to death with sight-seeing. I can't stop her; while she is on her legs it is her duty, and she will. The consequence is I get rushed through things

I want to let soak into me, and have to go again. My only way of getting her to rest has been by deserting her; and then I come back and receive reproaches with a meek countenance.

Mr. C— has been good to us and cordial, and brings his gondola often to our service. A gondola and a pair has quite a different motion from a one-oared gondola; it is like riding a sea-horse instead of a sea-camel—almost exciting, only it is so soft in its prancings.

He took A. and myself into the procession which welcomed the crowned heads last Wednesday; the hurly-burly of it was splendid. We tore down the Grand Canal from end to end, almost cheek by jowl with the royalties; the M.A. was quite jubilant when she heard we had had such "good places." Hundreds of gondolas swarmed round; many of them in the old Carpaccio rig-outs, very gorgeous, though a little tawdry when taken out of the canvas. But the rush and the collisions, and the sound of many waters walloping under the bellies of the gondolas, and the blows of fighting oars—regular underwater wrestling matches—made it as vivid and amusing as a prolonged Oxford and Cambridge boat-race in fancy costume. Our gondoliers streamed with the exertion, and looked like men fighting a real battle, and yet enjoyed it thoroughly. Violent altercations with police-boats don't ruffle them at all; at one moment it looks daggers drawn; at the next it is shrugs and smiles. Often, from not knowing enough of Italian and Italian ways, I get hot all over when an ordinary discussion is going on, thinking that blows are about to be exchanged. The Mother-Aunt had hung a wonderful satin skirt out of window for decoration; and when she leaned over it in a bodice of the same color, it looked as if she were sitting with her legs out as well! I suppose it was this peculiar

effect that, when the King and Queen came by earlier in the morning, won for her a special bow and smile.

I must hurry or I shall miss the post that I wish to catch. There seems little chance now of my getting you in Venice; but elsewhere perhaps you will drop to me out of the clouds.

Your own and most loving.

LETTER XXXIX.

My own, own Beloved:—Say that my being away does not seem too long? I have not had a letter yet, and that makes me somehow not anxious but compunctious; only writing to you of all I do helps to keep me in good conscience. Not the other foot gone to the mender's, I hope, with the same obstructive accompaniments as went to the setting-up again of the last? If I don't hear soon you will have me dancing on wires, which cost as much by the word as a gondola by the hour.

Yesterday we went to see Carpaccio at his best in San Giorgio di Schiavone; There are two St. George pictures, three St. Jeromes, and two of some other saint unknown to me. The St. Jerome series is really a homily on the love and pathos of animals. First is St. Jerome in his study with a sort of unclipped white poodle in the pictorial place of honor, all alone on a floor beautifully swept and garnished, looking up wistfully to his master busy at writing (a Benjy saying, "Come and take me for a walk, there's a good saint!"). Scattered among the adornments of the room are small bronzes of horses and, I think, birds. So, of course, these being his tastes, when St. Jerome goes into the wilderness, a lion takes to him, and accompanies him when he pays a call on the monks in a neighboring monastery. Thereupon, holy men of little faith, the entire fraternity take to their heels and rush upstairs, the hindermost clinging

to the skirts of the formermost to be hauled the quicker out of harm's way, and all the while the lion stands incorrectly offering the left paw, and Jerome with shrugs tries to explain that even the best butter wouldn't melt in his dear lion's mouth. After that comes the tragedy. St. Jerome lies dying in excessive odor of sanctity, and all the monks crowd round him with prayers and viaticums, and the ordinary stuffy pieties of a "happy death," while Jerome wonders feebly what it is he misses in all this to-do for which he cares so little. And there, elbowed far out into the cold, the lion lies and lifts his poor head and howls because he knows his master is being taken from him. Quite near to him, fastened to a tree, a queer, nondescript, crocodile-shaped dog runs out the length of its tether to comfort the disconsolate beast; but *la bête humaine* has got the whip-hand of the situation. In another picture is a parrot that has just mimicked a dog, or called "Carlo!" and then laughed; the dog turns his head away with a sleek, sheepish, shy look, exactly as a sensitive dog does when you make fun of him.

These are, perhaps, mere undercurrents of pictures which are quite glorious in color and design, but they help me to love Carpaccio to distraction; and when the others lose me, they hunt through all the Carpaccios in Venice till they find me!

Love me a little more if possible while I am so long absent from you! What I do and what I think go so much together now, that you will take what I write as the most of me that it is possible to cram in, coming back to you to share everything.

Under such an Italian sky as to-day how I would like to see your face! Here, dearest, among these palaces you would be in your peerage, for I think you have some southern blood in you.

Curious that, with all my fairness,

somebody said to me to-day, "But you are not quite English, are you?" And I swore by the nine gods of my ancestry that I was nothing else. But the look is in us; my father had a foreign air, but made up for it by so violent a patriotism that Uncle N. used to call him "John Bull let loose."

My love to England. Is it showing much autumn yet? My eyes long for green fields again. Since I have been in Italy I have not seen one until the other day from the top of St. Giorgio Maggiore, where one lies in hiding under the monastery walls.

All that I see now quickens me to fresh thoughts of you. Yet do not expect me to come back wiser; my last effort at wisdom was to fall in love with you, and there I stopped for good and all. There I am still, everything included; what do you want more? My letter and my heart both threaten to be overweight, so no more of them this time. Most dearly do I love you.

LETTER XL.

Beloved:—If two days slip by, I don't know where I am when I come to write; things get so crowded in such a short space of time. Where I left off I know not; I will begin where I am most awake—your letter which I have just received.

That is well, dearest, that is well, indeed; a truce till February! And since the struggle then must needs be a sharp one—with only one end, as we know—do not vex her now by any overt signs of preparation as if you assumed already that her final arguments were to be as so much chaff before the wind. You do not tell me *what* she argues, and I do not ask. She does not say I shall not love you enough!

To answer businesslike to your questions first; with your forgiveness we stay here till the 25th, and get back to England with the last of the month.

Does that seem a very cruel, far-off date? Others have the wish to stay even longer, and it would be no fairness to hurry them beyond a certain degree of reasonableness with my particular reason for impatience, seeing, moreover, that in your love I have every help for remaining patient. It is too much to hope, I suppose, that the "truce" sets you free now, and that you could meet us here after all, and prolong our stay indefinitely? I know one besides myself who would be glad, and would welcome an outside excuse dearly.

For, oh, the funniness of near and dear things! Arthur's heart is laid up with a small love affair, and it is the comicaest of internal maladies. He is screwing up courage to tell me all about it, and I write in haste before my mouth is sealed by his confidences. I fancy I know the party, an energetic little mortal whom we met at Lucerne, where Arthur lingered while we came on to Florence. She talked vaguely of being in Venice some time this autumn; and the vagueness continues. Arthur, in consequence, roams round disconsolately with no interest but in hotel books. And for fear lest we should gird up his loins and drag him away with us out of *Paradisal* possibilities, he is forever praising Venice as a resting place, and saying he wants to be nowhere else. The bathing just keeps him alive; but when put to it to explain what charms him when pictures do not, and architecture only slightly, he says in exemplary brotherly fashion that he likes to see me completing my education and enthusiasms—and does not realize with how foreign an air that explanation sits upon his shoulders.

I saw to-day a remnant of your patron saint, and for your sake transferred a kiss to it, Italian fashion, with my thumb and the sign of the cross. I hope it will do you good. Also, I

have been up among the galleries of St. Mark's, and about the roof and the west front where somebody or another painted his picture of the bronze horses.

The pigeons get to recognize people personally, and grow more intimate every time we come. I even conceive they make favorites, for I had three pecking food out of my mouth to-day and refusing to take it in any other fashion, and they coo and say thank you before and after every seed they take or spill. They are quite the pleasantest of all the Italian beggars—and the cleanest.

Your friend pressed us in to tea yesterday; I think less for the sake of giving us tea than that we should see his palace, or rather his first floor, in which alone he seems to lose himself. I have no idea for measurements, but I imagine his big sala is about eighty feet long and perhaps twenty-five feet across, with a flat-beamed roof, windows at each end, and portières along the walls of old blue Venetian linen; a place in which it seems one could only live and think nobly. His face seems to respond to its teachings. What more might not an environment like that bring out in you? Come and let me see! I have hopes springing as I think of things that you may be coming after all; and that that is what lay concealed under the gaiety of your last paragraph. Then I am more blessed even than I knew. What, you are coming? So well I do love you, my Beloved!

LETTER XLI.

Dearest:—This letter will travel with me; we leave to-day. Our movements are to be too restless and uncomfortable for the next few days for me to have a chance of quiet seeing or quiet writing anywhere. At Riva we shall rest, I hope.

Yesterday a storm began coming over towards evening, and I thought to myself that if it passed in time there should be a splendid sunset of smoulder and glitter to be seen from the Campanile, and perhaps by good chance a rainbow.

I went alone; when I got to the top the rain was pelting hard; so there I stayed, happily weather-bound for an hour looking over Venice "silvered with slants of rain," and watching umbrellas scuttering below with toes beneath them. The golden smoulder was very slow in coming; it lay over the mainland and came creeping along the railway track. Then came the glitter and the sun, and I turned round and found my rainbow. But it wasn't a bow, it was a circle; the Campanile stood up as it were a spoke in the middle—the lower curve of the rainbow lay on the ground of the Piazzetta, cut off sharp by the shadow of the Campanile. It was worth waiting an hour to see. The islands shone mellow and bright in the clearance with the storm going off black behind them. Good-bye, Venice!

Verona began by seeming dull to me; but it improves and unfolds beautiful corners of itself to be looked at; only I am given so little time. The tombs of the Della Scalas and the Renaissance façade of the Consiglio are what chiefly delight me. I had some quiet hours in the Museo where I fell in love with a little picture by an unknown painter, of Orpheus charming the beasts in a wandering green landscape, with a dance of fauns in the distance, and here and there Eurydice running;—and Orpheus in Hades, and the Thracian women killing him, and a crocodile fishing out his head and mermaids and ducks sitting above their reflections reflecting.

Also there is one beautiful Tobias and the Angel there by a painter whose name I most ungratefully forget. I

saw a man yesterday carrying fishes in the market, each strung through the gills on a twig of myrtle; that is how Tobias ought to carry his fish; when a native custom suggests old paintings, how charming it always is!

Riva.

We have just got here from Verona. In the matter of a garden at least it is a Paradise of a place. A great sill of honeysuckle leans out from my window; beyond is a court grown round with creepers, and beyond that the garden—such a garden! The first thing one sees is an arcade of vines upon stone pillars, between which peep stacks of roses, going off a little from their glory now, and right away stretches an alley of green, that shows at the end, a furlong off, the blue glitter of water. It is a beautifully wild garden; grass and vegetables and trees and roses all grow in a jungle together. There are little groves of bamboo and chestnut and willow; and a runnel of water is somewhere—I can hear it. It suggests rest, which I want; and so, for all its difference, suggests you, whom also I want—more, I own it now, than I have said! But that went without saying, Beloved, as it always must if it is to be the truth and nothing short of the truth.

While this has been waiting to go, your letter has been put into my hands. I am too happy to say words about it, and can afford now to let this go as it is. The little time of waiting for you will be perfect happiness now; and your coming seems to color all that is behind as well. I have had a good time indeed, and was only wearying with the plethora of my enjoyment; but the better time has been kept till now. We shall be together day after day and all day long for at least a month, I hope; a joy that has never happened to us yet.

Never mind about the lost letter now, dearest, dearest; Venice was a little

empty just one week because of it. I still hope it will come; but what matter?—I know *you* will. All my heart waits for you.—Your most glad and most loving.

LETTER XLII.

Dearest.—I saw an old woman riding a horse astride; and I was convinced on the spot that this is the rightest way of riding, and that the side-saddle was a foolish and affected invention. The horse was fine, and so was the young man leading it; the old woman was upright and stately, with a wide hat and full petticoats like a Maximilian soldier.

This was at Bozen, where we stayed for two nights, and from which I have brought a cold with me; it seems such an English thing to have, that I feel quite at home in the discomfort of it. It had been such wonderful weather that we were sitting out of doors every evening up to 9.30 P.M. without wraps, and on our heads only our "widows' caps." (The M.A. persists in a style which suggests that Uncle N. has gone to a better world.) Mine was too flimsy a work of fiction, and a day before I had been for a climb and got wet through, so a chill laid its benediction on my head, and here I am—not seriously incommoded by the malady, but by the remedy, which is the M.A. full of kind quackings and fierce tyranny if I do but put my head out of window to admire the view, whose best is a little round the corner.

I had no idea Innsbruck was so high up among the mountains, snows are on the peaks all around. Behind the house-tops, so close and near, lies a quarter circle of white crests. You are told that in winter creatures come down and look in at the windows; sometimes they are called wolves, sometimes bears—any way the feeling is mediæval.

Hereabouts the wayside shrines nearly always contain a crucifix, whereas in Italy that was rare—the Virgin and Child being the most common. I remarked on this, which I suppose gave rise to a subsequent observation of the M.A.'s: "I think the Tyrolese are a *good* people; they are not given over to Mariolatry like those poor priest-ridden Italians." I think, however, that they merely have that fundamental grace, religious simplicity, worshipping—just what they can get, for yesterday I saw two dear old bodies going round and telling their beads before the bronze statues of the Maximilian tomb—King Arthur, Charles the Bold, etc. I suppose, by mere association, a statue helps them to pray.

The national costume does look so nice, though not exactly beautiful. I like the flat, black hats with long streamers behind and a gold tassel, and the spacious apron. Blue satin is a favorite style, always silk or satin for Sunday best; one I saw of pearl-white brocade.

Since we came north we have had lovely weather, except the one day of which I am still the filterings; and morning along the Brenner Pass was perfect. I think the mountains look most beautiful quite early, at sunrise, when they are all pearly and mysterious.

We go on to Zurich on Thursday, and then, Beloved, and then!—so this must be my last letter, since I shall have nowhere to write to with you rushing all across Europe and resting nowhere because of my impatience to have you.

The Mother-Aunt concedes a whole month, but Arthur will have to leave earlier for the beginning of term. How little my two dearest men have yet seen of each other! Barely a week lies between us; this will scarcely catch you. Dearest of dearests, my heart waits on yours.

LETTER XLIII.

(Enclosure.)

My Dearest :—See what an effect your "gallous young hound" episode has had on me. I send it back to you roughly done into rhyme. I don't know whether it will carry; for, outside your telling of it "Johnnie Kigarrow" is not a name of heroic sound. What touches me as so strangely complete about it is that you should have got that impression and momentary romantic delusion as a child, and now hear, years after, of his disappearing out of life thus fittingly and mysteriously, so that his name will fix its legend to the countryside for many a long day. I would like to go there some day with you, and standing on Twloch Hill imagine all the country round as the burial-place of the strong man on whose knees my beloved used to play when a child.

It must have been soon after this that your brother died; truly, dearest, from now, and strangely, this Johnnie Kigarrow will seem more to me than him; touching a more heroic strain of idea, and stiffening fibres in your nature that brotherhood, as a rule, has no bearing on.

A short letter to-day, Beloved, because what goes with it is so long. This is the first time I have come before your eyes as anything but a letter-writer, and I am doubtful whether you will care to have so much all about yourself. Yet for that very reason think how much I loved doing it!

I am jealous of those days before I knew you, and want to have all their wild-honey flavor for myself. Do remember more and tell me! Dearest heart, it was to me you were coming through all your scampers and ramblings; no wonder, with that unknown good running parallel, that my childhood was a happy one. May long life bless you, Beloved!

My brother and I were down in Wales,

And listened by night to the Welshman's tales;

He was eleven and I was ten.

We sat on the knees of the farmer's men

After the whole day's work was done; And I was friends with the farmer's son.

His hands were rough as his arms were strong,

His mouth was merry and loud for song;

Each night when set by the ingle-wall He was the merriest man of them all.

I would catch at his beard and say

All the things I had done in the day—

Tumbled boulders over the force,

Swum in the river and fired the gorse—

"Half the side of the hill!" quoth I;

"Ah!" cried he, "and didn't you die?"

"Chut!" said he, "but the squeak was narrow!

Didn't you meet with Johnnie Kigarrow?"

"No!" said I, "and who will he be?

And what will be Johnnie Kigarrow to me?"

The farmer's son said under his breath,

"Johnnie Kigarrow may be your death!

Listen you here, and keep you still— Johnnie Kigarrow bides under the hill;

Twloch barrow stands over his head;

He shallows the river to make his bed;

Boulders roll when he stirs a limb;

And the gorse on the hills belongs to him!

And if so be one fires his gorse,

He's out of his bed, and he mounts his horse.

Off he sets; with the first long stride

He is halfway over the mountain side;

With his second stride he has crossed the barrow,

And he has you fast, has Johnnie Kigarrow!"

Half I laughed and half I feared;

I clutched and tugged at the strong man's beard,

And bragged as brave as a boy could
be—
"So? but, you see, he didn't catch me!"

Fear caught hold of me; what had I
done?

High as the roof rose the farmer's
son;

How the sight of him froze my marrow!

"I," he cried, "am Johnnie Kigarow!"

Well, you wonder, what was the end?
Never forget;—he had called me
"friend!"

Mighty of limb, and hard and brown;
Quickly he laughed and set me down.
"Heh!" said he, "but the squeak was
narrow,

Not to be caught by Johnnie Kigarow!"

Now, I hear, after years gone by,
Nobody knows how he came to die.
He strode out one night of storm;
"Get you to bed, and keep you warm!"
Out into darkness so went he;
Nobody knows where his bones may
be.

Only I think—if his tongue let go
Truth that once—how perhaps I know.
Twloch river, and Twloch barrow,
Do you cover my Johnnie Kigarow?

LETTER XLIV.

Dearest:—I have been doing something so wise and foolish; mentally wise, I mean, and physically foolish. Do you guess?—Disobeying your parting injunction, and sitting up to see eclipses.

It was such a luxury to do as I was *not* told just for once; to feel there was an independent me still capable of asserting itself. My belief is that, waking, you hold me subjugated; but, once your godhead has put on its spiritual nightcap, and begun nodding, your mesmeric influence relaxes. Up starts resolution and independence, and I breathe desolately for a time, feeling myself once more a free woman.

'Twas a tremulous experience, Be-

loved; but I loved it all the more for that. How we love playing at grief and death—the two things that must come—before it is their due time! I took a look at my world for three most mortal hours last night, trying to see you *out* of it. And oh, how close it kept bringing me! I almost heard you breathe, and was forever wondering—Can we ever be nearer, or love each other more than we do? For *that* we should each want a sixth sense, and a second soul; and it would still be only the same spread out over larger territory. I prefer to keep it nestling close in its present limitations, where it feels like a "growing pain;" children have it in their legs, we in our hearts.

I am growing sleepy as I write, and feel I am sending you a dull letter—my penalty for doing as you forbade.

I sat up from half-past one to a quarter to five to see our shadow go over heaven. I didn't see much, the sky was too piebald; but I was not disappointed, as I had never watched the darkness into dawn like that before; and it was interesting to hear all the persons awaking;—cocks at half-past four, frogs immediately after, then pheasants and various others following. I was cuddled close up against my window, throned in a big arm-chair, with many pillows, a spirit lamp, cocoa, bread-and-butter, and buns; so I fared well. Just after the pheasants and the first querulous fidgetings of hungry blackbirds comes a soft patting along the path below; and Benjy, secretive and important, is fussing his way to the shrubbery, when instinct or real sentiment prompts him to look up at my window; he gives a whimper and a wag, and goes on. I try to persuade myself that he didn't see me, and that he does this other mornings, when I am not thus perversely bolstered up in rebellion, and peering through blinds at wrong hours. Isn't there something pathetic in the

very idea that a dog may have a behind-your-back attachment of that sort?—that every morning he looks up at an unresponsive blank, and wags and goes by?

I heard him very happy in the shrubs a moment after; he and a pheasant, I fancy, disputing over a question of boundaries. And he comes in for breakfast, three hours later, looking positively *fresh*, and wants to know why I am yawning.

Most mornings he brings your letter up to my room in his mouth. It is old Nan-nan's joke; she only sends up *yours* so, and pretends it is Benjy's own clever selection. I pretend that, too, to him; and he thinks he is doing something wonderful. The other morning I was—well, Benjy hears splashing; and tires of waiting—or his mouth waters. An extra can of hot water happens to stand at the door; and therein he deposits his treasure (mine I mean), and retires saying nothing. The consequence is, when I open three minutes after his scratch, I find you all ungummed and swimming, your beautiful handwriting bleared and smeared, so that no eye but mine could have read it. Benjy's shame when I showed him what he had done was wonderful.

How it rejoices me to write quite foolish things to you!—that I *can* helps to explain a great deal in the up-above order of things, which I never took in when I was merely young and frivolous. One must have touched a grave side of life before one can take in that Heaven is not opposed to laughter.

My eye has just caught back at what I have written; and the "little death" runs through me, just because I wrote "grave side." It shouldn't, but loving has made me superstitious; the happiness seems too great; how can it go on? I keep thinking—this is not life; you are too much for me, my dearest!

Oh, my Beloved, come quickly to meet me to-day; this morning! Ride over; I am willing it. My own dearest, you must come. If you don't what shall I believe? That Love cannot out-do space; that when you are away I cannot reach you by willing. But I can; come to me! You shall see my arms open to you as never before. What is it?—you must be coming. I have more love in me after all than I knew.

Ah, I know; I wrote "grave side," and all my heart is in arms against the treason. With us it is not "till death us do part;" we leap it altogether, and are clasped on the other side.

My dear, my dear, I lay my head down on your heart; I love you! I post this to show how certain I am. At 12 to-day I shall see you.

LETTER XLV.

Beloved.:—I look at this ridiculous little nib now, running like a plough along the furrows! What can the poor thing do? Bury its poor, black, blunt little nose in the English language in order to tell you, in all sorts of round-about ways, what you know already as well as I do. And yet, though that is all it can do, you complain of not having had a letter? Not had a letter? Beloved, there are half a hundred I have not had from you! Do you suppose you have ever, any one week in your life, sent me as many as I wanted?

Now, for once, I did hold off and didn't write to you; because there was something in your last I couldn't give any answer to, and I hoped you would come yourself before I need. Then I hoped silence would bring you; and now—no!—instead of your dear peace-giving face I get this complaint!

Ah, Beloved, have you in reality any complaint, or sorrow, that I can set at rest? Or has that little, little silence

made you anxious? I do come to think so, for you never flourish your words about as I do; so, believing that, I would like to write again differently; only it is truer to let what I have written stand, and make amends for it in all haste. I love you so infinitely well, how could even a year's silence give you any doubt or anxiety, so long as you knew I was not ill?

"Should one not make great concessions to great grief even when it is unreasonable?" I cannot answer, dearest; I am in the dark. Great grief can not be great without reasons; it should give them, and you should judge by them;—you, not I. I imagine you have again been face to face with fierce, unexplained opposition. Dearest, if it would give you happiness, I would say, make five, ten, twenty years' "concession," as you call it. But the only time you ever spoke to me clearly about your mother's mind towards me, you said she wanted an absolute surrender from you, not covered only by her lifetime.

Then, though I pitied her, I had to smile. A twenty years' concession even would not give rest to her perturbed spirit. I pray truly—having so much reason for your sake to pray it—"God rest her soul! and give her a saner mind towards both of us."

Why has this come about at all? It is not February yet; and *our* plans have been putting forth no buds before their time. When the day comes, and you have said the inevitable word, I think more calm will follow than you expect. *You*, dearest, I do understand; and the instinct of tenderness you have towards a claim which yet fills you with the sense of its injustice. I know that you can laugh at her threat to make you poor; but not at hurting her affections. Did your asking for an "answer" mean that I was to write so openly? Bless you, my own dearest.

LETTER XLVI.

Dearest:—To-day I came upon a strange spectacle; poor old Nan-nan weeping for wounded pride in me. I found her stitching at raiment of needlework that is to be mine (piles of it have been through her fingers since the word first went out; for her love asserts that I am to go all home-made from my old home to my new one—wherever that may be!). And she was weeping because as I slowly got to understand, from one particular quarter too little attention had been paid to me:—the kow-tow of a ceremonious reception into my new status had not been deep enough to make amends to her heart for its partial loss of me.

Her deferential recognition of the change which is coming is pathetic and full of etiquette; it is at once so jealous and so unselfish. Because her sense of the proprieties will not allow her to do so much longer, she comes up to my room and makes opportunity to scold me over quite slight things;—and there I am, meeker under her than I would be to any relative. So, to-day I had to bear a statement of your mother's infirmities rigorously outlined in a way I could only pretend to be deaf to until she was done. Then I said, "Nan-nan, go and say your prayers!" And as she stuck her heels down and refused to go, there I left the poor thing, not to prayer, I fear, but to desolate weeping, in which love and pride will get more firmly tangled together than ever.

I know when I go up to my room next I shall find fresh flowers put upon my table; and the grievous old dear will be carrying a sore heart that I cannot comfort by any words. I cannot convince her that I am not hiding in myself any wounds such as she feels on my behalf.

I write this, dearest, as an indirect

answer to yours—which is but Nannan's woe writ large. If I could persuade your two dear but very different heads how very slightly wounded I am by a thing which a little waiting will bring right, I could give it even less thought than I do. Are you keeping the truce in spirit when you disturb yourself like this? Trust me, Be-

loved, always to be candid; I will explain to you when I feel in need of comfort. Be comforted yourself, meanwhile, and don't shape ghosts of grief which never do a goose-step over me! Ah, well, well, if there is a way to love you better than I do now, only show it me! Meantime, think of me as your most contented and happy-go-loving.

(*To be continued.*)

THE APOTHEOSIS OF ANNE.

I.

Five years ago my sister Anne was what you might call a fairly pretty girl—not a beauty like Chloe, who was all dash and dimples and color, but pretty in a superior, graceful, slight, long-necked way of her own, which was not without its charm. That was before Lyndhurst came down to stay, however, and just about the time when Teddy Marsden fell unexpectedly in love with Anne.

Now, as I have just said, Anne was a very charming girl, and tremendously superior, but somehow I used to find her a trifle difficult to get on with. She had a way of forgiving you with a kind of saintly sweetness for sins you had never committed, and then reminding you of them afterwards, and so Chloe and I (who used to quarrel a dozen times in an hour, but were otherwise inseparable)—when Teddy Marsden began to develop an outrageous interest in my mother's excellent health and a curious facility for forgetting his umbrella and calling for it twice a day—Chloe and I rejoiced exceedingly.

Not that we wanted to get rid of Anne, but we wanted to see her comfortably settled. Marsden had a fine income. There was only one between

him and the title, and not to put too fine a point upon it, he was the only eligible man that wanted her. It is true every single curate that came to the place proposed to Anne, but as Chloe very truly said, "Curates don't count," and as regards all the others, though they one and all went to Anne for consolation, it was only after they had proposed to Chloe, who had "cried very much" and refused them.

This, however, is not a story about Chloe but about Anne—Anne, who was a rather pretty girl and on the point of being engaged to Teddy Marsden, before Lyndhurst came down to stay five years ago.

Now the coming of Lyndhurst happened thus: I had to go up to town on business, and Chloe, who had bicycled into a ditch in the dark the night before and strained her foot, had passionately adjured me to bring her down "a box of marrons glacés, a little gold pig for her chain," and lastly, "a decent man," by way of consolation. I had faithfully executed her first two commissions when I chanced on her third in the shape of Lyndhurst, who, in immaculate frock coat and pale gray gloves, was sauntering down Bond Street as I came out of Charbonnels.

There is no need for me to describe

Lyndhurst, for everybody knows him; nor is there any need for me to say that I had sworn by him, hero-worshipped him and finally hated him, for everybody goes through the same thing. The hating period, however, was as far distant as the worshipping when I met him that morning, for I hadn't set eyes on him for years. He hadn't changed a bit, however, unless, indeed, he was handsomer than ever.

Melancholy eyes, radiant smile, charming voice! Before two minutes had passed he had bridged over our five years separation, placed our acquaintance on the old footing, and with the most delightful assurance in the world asked himself down to stay.

"I know it will be dull, dear old man," said he, "and I shall bore myself to death; but don't worry about that. It will be a rest, and that's what I want. It will be terrible, but the rest will do me good." (Really, when you come to think of it, Lyndhurst is inimitable!) "Rest and pretty women," said he. "There are always pretty women in the country—milkmaids, and better class girls with watering-pots and scissors. That's what I want. A new type to inspire me. You're going down this afternoon? Good. I can't stay and lunch with you, dear old man, for I've an engagement; but I shall be home by four—the old address; you'd better come and fetch me."

Had any other man—but this was Lyndhurst. I fetched him.

What is more, his valet being indisposed, I packed for him, and as he could not "move" without his afternoon tea, the housekeeper being out. . . . But we have all been to the old address; there is no need to recapitulate what happened, and to tell the truth I resented nothing. I felt sure Chloe would avenge me.

We missed our train, so we had to wait for the 5.47; but we passed the hour and a half very pleasantly at Vic-

toria noting the artistic value of glass as a background to smoke, and as Lyndhurst pointed out to me, it was really all for the best, for we should have a much more beautiful drive in the cool of the evening.

As a matter of fact he was right. The day had been tremendously hot, and as we drove through the delicious air the effect of the sunset was something gorgeous over the gorse on the common. Lyndhurst was in ecstasies.

"The quiet, the open sky, the trees, the loneliness, the country smell!—How shall I ever thank you for over-persuading me!" he said as we turned in at the gates and went up the avenue ("over-persuading" struck me as peculiarly happy). "Look at these oaks" (they were elms)! "Listen to those rooks" (they were crows)! "Ah, it is perfect! It only needs—" he stopped short and clutched my arm wildly. "In the name of heaven, who is *that*?"

Contrary to my expectations (I had wired announcing our visitor's arrival), *that* was not Chloe but Anne. Anne in gardening gloves and a white frock, pensively snipping off dead sunflowers with a huge pair of garden scissors, and gazing with mild approval at the setting sun.

"It is Clytie!" said Lyndhurst. "Clytie waiting for Apollo!"

"Pardon me," I replied, "It is my sister Anne waiting for her dinner."

To my dying day I shall never forget the look of disgust on Lyndhurst's face, nor for that matter the look a moment later on Chloe's when Lyndhurst bowed on being introduced, and then looked the other way. Both were distinctly precious, but the best of all, I think, was my mother's when Lyndhurst kissed her dear old hand, and before she could open her mouth, told her he meant to stay in this Paradise forever, and begged her to consider him as her new and most devoted son.

At first she gazed helplessly at me

as if to ask if he'd suddenly gone mad; then her eyes softened with an indescribable understanding as they fell on Chloe, and it is my firm belief that the dear old soul would have said "Bless you, my children," and gathered Lyndhurst then and there to her heart, had not Anne herself opened the door and come in.

She had not heard of the telegram, so stood for a second looking at Lyndhurst irresolutely. A shaft of sun fell, glorifying her fair hair to the color of the sunflowers in her hand. For the first time in my life I saw Anne with another person's eyes and realized that she was pretty.

"Mr. Lyndhurst. My daughter Anne."

There seems always to be a special Providence told off to provide Lyndhurst with an opportunity. As Anne bowed, one of her flowers slipped and would have fallen to the ground, had not Lyndhurst, with his own peculiar dexterity, caught it.

"It is a good omen," he said, handing it back to Anne.

"*It is a good omen.*" Nothing more than that. But that evening at dinner, Anne, who never wore flowers, had sunflowers at her waist, and later on, when Teddy Marsden took her into the kitchen garden and proposed, Anne refused him.

II.

That's how it began, or rather, as I am speaking of Lyndhurst, that's how it ended, for with him the end and the beginning are one. With Lyndhurst to wish was to have, and to have was not to want. Desire was the very breath of life to him, and possession the instantaneous quenching of desire.

Knowing this as I did, it was perhaps not very wise of me to bring him into personal touch with two young girls—sisters of my own—but who is always wise? And, to tell the truth, I

had largely forgotten that particular side of him—one can forget a good deal in five years—and if I gave the matter a thought it was only to laugh in anticipation of the lesson Chloe would read him. As it turned out it was not Chloe who held the Book of Life open for Lyndhurst at that particular page, but Anne.

To my dying day I shall never understand how it came about, but so it was.

Chloe had "excellent coloring," but the sun, moon and stars, according to Lyndhurst, had been created solely for the purpose that they might shine on Anne. He would sit and gaze at her by the hour together, saying nothing, doing nothing, simply sit "and drink her in," while Anne, who had never been known to "idle" for five consecutive minutes in her life, would turn her head first this way and then that, and lift her chin, and lower her hand, as complacently as if she had been a model at half a crown an hour.

To the uninitiate it seemed an odd amusement for a lovely August morning, but there were plenty of rooms in the house, and as they were in nobody's way but their own . . .

Meals, however, were quite a different matter—and after a little time they became things of terror. At meals the one topic of conversation was Anne. The setting of Anne's head on Anne's neck—the line of Anne's throat to Anne's ear—the cutting of Anne's nose and the curve of Anne's wrist. It sounds incredible, but it is nevertheless absolutely true, that not only did Lyndhurst postpone his own meal (until we had all finished, when the dishes would have to be brought back again) to dilate to Anne's family on Anne's charms, but Anne's family would subdue the clatter of their own knives and forks to listen! As for Anne herself—she who could eat her mutton chop with the best of us—it's my belief she

half starved herself, for, from the day when Lyndhurst (who had just eaten his way through seven courses) said women should not eat meat, Anne became a vegetarian. It was a sight for the gods to see Lyndhurst helping himself to cutlets and enthusiastically pointing out to Anne the exquisite coloring of poached eggs on spinach—or desecrating (over beef and Yorkshire pudding) on the days of Tyre and Sidon, otherwise the "God-given purple" of poor Anne's plate of mulberries and cream. Teddy Marsden—who nearly knocked Lyndhurst down when he asked to change places with me in order to try a new lamp effect on Anne's hair—Teddy went to my mother and with tears in his honest eyes implored her to put a stop to the thing or Anne would go into a decline!

That was a lover's license though, for Anne had never looked so well in her life. If Lyndhurst drank Anne in—the ambrosia and nectar of Lyndhurst's praise certainly served Anne as food. She bloomed up under it like a flower warming itself in the sun; there was a grace, a radiance about her in those days that was perfectly amazing.

And though Chloe would have died rather than confess it, I could not help fancying she was rather sore. She had had it her own way for so long, and when the earth which has revolved around you all your life suddenly begins revolving round somebody else . . . !!

"It's my turn to play consoler now," said Chloe to me one morning as she stood at the window watching Teddy Marsden mooning down the drive.

"How do you like the rôle?" I asked.

"Better than being made a fool of like Anne," said she, tossing her pretty head.

"Dear me," said I, "must a woman needs be a fool because a man happens to be in love with her?"

"A *man*!" cried Chloe. "In *love*!"

I wouldn't have given twopence for Anne's future chances of foolery if Lyndhurst had been by to see Chloe's face just then. It was beautiful in its superb young scorn.

"Well," I said, "a good many women would give their heads to stand in Anne's shoes to-day. If it hadn't been for a certain chance it might have been you they were envying."

"What *do* you mean?" said Chloe opening her eyes.

"One day when you were out there, Lyndhurst happened to say that six months ago he had simply raved about your type of girl—so you see . . ."

"It looks well for Anne in six months' time," said Chloe drily, "doesn't it?"

That afternoon I took it upon myself to drop a friendly word of advice to Anne.

"I suppose you know what you're about," I said—"but Lyndhurst's the deuce of a flirt."

Anne's eyes are bright turquoise blue—but when she's offended they've no more expression in them than pieces of stone.

"Did Chloe ask you to tell me that?" said she.

"No," said I, "she didn't. But even if she had it wouldn't make it any the less true. Lyndhurst's a delightful chap and as clever as you make 'em, but you mustn't take him too seriously. He doesn't mean half he says. Six months ago he was infatuated with some woman in Paris, for the moment he's infatuated with you—six months hence he'll be infatuated with somebody else."

"I suppose you won't deny that I'm indebted for your last remark to Chloe?" said Anne.

"Why drag Chloe into it?" said I. "What's it got to do with her? Don't you suppose I've got eyes and ears and a tongue of my own? Why, any fool could see you're pleased at the way Lyndhurst's making the running.

You've altered all your ways to please him—you've refused one of the best chaps in the world—and a thundering good offer too—because of him. Why, you've even altered the way you do your hair, and a precious guy you've made of yourself, to suit him."

"Am I to wear a fringe all my life because Chloe can't wear a parting?" said Anne.

"You can shave your head for all I care," I cried. "I don't know what's come to you, you never used to be like this. If your head's so turned by Lyndhurst's flattery that you can't listen to a friendly word of advice from your own brother, I'm sorry for you. I wish to goodness I'd never brought him to the house."

"Because he didn't happen to fall in love with Chloe?" said Anne sweetly.

What are you to say to a girl like that? For my part I confined myself to one word and walked out of the room—leaving Anne looking at herself in the glass with the utmost satisfaction.

Is this a very vulgar story? Perhaps we *were* very vulgar (most people are when you come to think of it), but we were also very human—especially Anne who came down that night in a kind of dressing-gown arrangement tied in the middle like a bolster.

"Why on earth has Anne got on that nightgown?" I asked Chloe after dinner.

Chloe laughed until she nearly made herself ill.

"Fifteen guineas at Liberty's!" she gasped.

"For goodness' sake, make Anne go upstairs and take that thing off," I said to my mother.

"Oh! my dear, I wouldn't do such a thing for the world—she looks so pretty and . . . and she's so happy."

"Gracious!" cried Chloe, jumping up from the floor where she lay with her

head in my mother's lap—"has he proposed?"

"No, my dear—not in so many words—but he has given her to understand"—my mother fluttered her pretty hands—"he has given her an ornament he specially designed for her. She came to my room before dinner and asked if she might keep it—dear Anne, she is always so good! I don't approve of that sort of thing, you know, my dears; your dear father never gave me anything until we were properly engaged—but I hadn't the heart to refuse her—and of course things are different nowadays and one must go with the times—and," here my mother smiled at us deprecatingly, "and the ornament could not have cost *very* much."

Chloe doubled herself up with delight. "Oh, you darling!" said she, flinging her arms round our mother and hugging her—"you dear, adorable old darling—what a sweet up-to-date, nineteenth century old parent it's getting, to be sure! How much do you suppose it cost, Mummy?—One and elevenpence halfpenny at Peter Robinson's, or fourpence three farthings at Whiteleys?"

"Oh, my dear," said my mother, "it's not the gift but the giver that Anne values."

"Then it's only fourpence three farthings," said Chloe flippantly. "Tell us, Mummy—is he going to propose?"

My mother's delicate face flushed all over. "Chloe darling!" she exclaimed, "how can you ask? He is only waiting until dear Anne gives him the opportunity."

"Ahem!" said Chloe, "then in that case I should advise dear Anne not to keep him waiting long."

"I'm sure I can't think what Chloe can mean," said my mother to me afterwards in great perplexity; "why, I've never seen anything like Guy's devotion to dear Anne in all my life. I think it is something beautiful."

It was. Most beautiful, from a romantic point of view—but then, I am not a romantic person—and as week after week went by and still Anne did not “give Lyndhurst his opportunity,” I began to wish Lyndhurst and Anne at the bottom of the Red Sea.

To tell the plain truth, they became a perfect nuisance. I said a little while ago there were plenty of sitting-rooms in the house; there were, but after a time Lyndhurst and Anne overflowed into every one of them. Needless to say, he had at once begun painting her, and before very long you couldn’t walk a yard without running into an easel and a half-finished portrait of Anne.

I’m not saying the sketches weren’t clever; they were, exquisitely clever, even in their unfinished state, but the smell of the paint was abominable, and as Lyndhurst “passed” from room to room “chasing the mood,” it ended by the entire family assembling in the dining-room, and in the midst of reminiscent odors of departed beef and mutton, offering up prayers for Anne’s speedy vouchsafing of Lyndhurst’s “opportunity.”

One evening, for the first time since he had been in the house, Lyndhurst came into the smoking-room after dinner and requested whiskey and a cigarette. I attended to his wants, and then prepared to listen preparatory to offering him my blessing.

For a long time he sat without speaking, then he got up and helped himself again to whiskey.

“Poor chap,” thought I, “screwing himself up to the point.”

“The whiskey is not too bad,” said Lyndhurst, in his affable way, “but the cigarettes are abominable.” He lighted a second as he spoke, sank into his chair, closed his eyes and again relapsed into silence. I sat watching him, thinking how confoundingly handsome the fellow was, and wondering what kind of settlements he would be pre-

pared to make, when suddenly he threw away his second cigarette and lighted a third.

“Nervous?” I said.

He moved his head restlessly. “*Au bout de mes forces.*”

In certain moods Lyndhurst invariably relapses into French—purest Parisian—he can speak all languages under the sun) but to me intensely aggravating.

“That’s bad,” I said, “what’s wrong?”

The third cigarette followed the second. “It’s your sister,” he said irritably. He broke off again and struck a match. There was no mistake about it, his hand was trembling. Since the days of disillusion I had never felt towards him so kindly.

“My sister Anne?” I suggested feelingly.

“No, no,” he said, “the other one. The little one with the *fin-de-siècle* face and the old world name.”

“Chloe?” I shouted, starting to my feet?

Lyndhurst smiled ineffably. “Chloe,” said he, and shut his eyes.

I sat down again and gasped. Chloe! Then what about the last six weeks? what about the sunflowers? what about the Liberty gown? what about the understanding? what about Anne?

Anne, who was waiting outside trembling and blushing while we talked “horrid business.” Anne, standing in the moonlight among the roses until I called her in. . . . To congratulate Chloe and her lover! The thing was impossible! Monstrous!

But Lyndhurst was speaking again. “I had been too absorbed before,” he said, “but she is charming! Charming! That little velvet band at her wrist against the up-to-date dress, like her face and name, a sweet contradiction. I should like to paint her as a symbol, holding the hands of the two centuries, and her feet—she has really

charming feet—trampling on Time. Just hands, and a smile and a footprint in the dust." He turned his brilliant eyes on me. "She is quite right," he said, "I have been dallying too long—the primrose path—the primrose path! I must come to the point." The light of his smile mocked the lamplight shining on his face. "It's the sun," he said, "I've been overbold and Apollo is jealous. This is his revenge." The smile died away and left him suddenly old and haggard. "The work is bad," he cried with a gesture of despair.

"The work?" I cried, "the work. Is that the trouble?"

"What else?" said he, regarding me with sombre eyes. "What else in the world *could* trouble me? The work is bad, bad!"

"Nonsense, my dear fellow," I cried, "nonsense! The work is beautiful, splendid, gorgeous, the best that you've ever done in your life! I think so, everybody thinks so, Anne thinks so. Look." I went to the window and held aside the curtain. "There's a picture for you if you like. If you're not satisfied with Clytie worshipping the sun, paint Clytie worshipping the moon!" I lifted my hand and Lyndhurst came forward and looked over my shoulder at Anne. Anne in her white Liberty gown with her hands folded over her breast and a rapt look on her lifted face as of one who sees visions. "She's my own sister," said I, "but by Jove she's worth painting! Man alive, she's beautiful!"

Lyndhurst drew his breath with a shuddering gasp of delight. "Beautiful," he whispered, "beautiful! She's divine! and I smoking a cigarette, polluted wretch that I am, and thinking of decadent art, and the *frou-frou* of flame-colored petticoats, while she—" He grasped my arm and shook it in his excitement. "Our eyes are holden that we may not see," he said hoarsely,

"but there are hours, moments! Look at the white—gold air, look at the gold—white moon. Great God, it shall be my masterpiece! To your knees, man, and thank God for the perfection of that face . . . and . . . and," he let go my arm and rushed out into the garden, "and send me out an easel and some paints," he shouted after him.

I did not follow Lyndhurst's suggestion and return thanks to the Creator for my sister Anne's face (the ecstasy on it as she turned to greet him made me ashamed to look at her) but I did offer up a very sincere prayer for her happiness, which seemed to me the thing which most needed praying for; then having watched with considerable edification the installation of the easel and the posing of Anne, I went in search of Chloe.

That "sweet contradiction," as Lyndhurst called her, was sitting in a last century attitude on a corner of the billiard table studying an unmistakably up-to-date nineteenth century book.

As I entered she turned to me, her face alight with expectation. "Well?" she said. "Well?" I wagged my head at her with elderly brotherly solemnity. "What does he say?" said Chloe eagerly.

"He says your hands are strong enough to hold two centuries at a time," I said gloomily.

Chloe darted a glance at her absurd little hands glittering with rings, then her eyes came back to my face. "Don't be so silly. What did he say?"

"He says your feet are big enough to trample on Old Time."

Chloe darted a glance at her ridiculous little feet in their dainty Queen Anne shoes—and again her eyes returned to my face. "Don't fool, there's a dear boy. I want to know really. What did he say?"

"That the sun's jealous of him," I said grimly, "so he's going to turn his attention to the moon."

There was a swirl of red silk petticoats as Chloe jumped down on the floor. "If you can answer an intelligent question," she said, "where is Anne?"

"I can't say, love," I answered. "When last I saw her she was ecstatically embracing something on the lawn."

Temple Bar.

The color came and went in Chloe's face like a flame. "Lyndhurst?" she said, catching her breath.

"No, love," I replied, "the cedar tree." Chloe lifted her dress delicately with both hands. "*Idiot*," she said and stepped through the window out on to the moonlit path.

(*To be concluded.*)

A BALLADE OF BURDEN.

"Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn."

I.

Our necks are bowed beneath the yoke;
Our slow feet stumble o'er the road;
Grim fear stalks by us from dawn till dark,
The fear of the merciless whip and goad.
Comrades we, in the day's dull round
Of light refreshment and lengthy fast;
Upheld alone by one sure hope,
The hope of the rest that must come at last.

II.

The fierce rain cuts, and the red sun burns,
Faint are our bodies, and heavy the load;
The seared skin shrinks from the fly's light touch,
Yet ever behind are the whip and goad.
Is it hours or years since the day began?
Since the brief sweet moments of night flashed past?
We are strong in the hope that will not fail,
The hope of the rest that must come at last.

III.

The children of men are hard of heart,
Recking nought of the toilsome road;
Though sore feet stumble, and galled necks droop,
They spare not the merciless whip and goad.
Is there never a heart that is moved to see
Our lives of labor, and pain, and fast?

Ay, there is One who in mercy sends
The long, long rest that must come at last.

L'ENVOI.

The age-long hours, the endless road,
The fear of the merciless whip and goad,
All the horrors of life will be over and past,
When we find the rest that *must* come at last.

Temple Bar.

M. D.

THE QUEEN AS A FARMER.

Almost from the time of her marriage her late Majesty Queen Victoria was a practical and successful farmer. Her "occupations," to use the business word, were not mere bits of the Royal estates, on which to produce butter and cream for the household. Home farms in this sense generally do not pay, and in the old days it was considered ungentle to make them pay. Hers were genuine farms, for which she paid rent, so that she entered and maintained them under the same difficulties and conditions as the majority of agriculturists in England. The history of these is given at considerable length by the agricultural papers, especially by the Field and the Live Stock Journal, which justly note that during the long retirement of the Queen from public life she never lost touch with the great industry of agriculture, and maintained undiminished her control of the farms, which the Prince Consort had first jointly undertaken with her, and her interest in the great shows and other public efforts made to improve implements, crops and cattle.

Reading these notes, it is impossible not to be struck with the degree in which the Queen and her husband were "before the world" in this inter-

est in the beasts of the farm and the crops of the fields. Now it is a fashionable amusement with the rich. Then, when agriculture was only recovering from the losses of the early parts of the century, it was a bold thing even for a Queen to be a practical agriculturist. Society would have laughed at failure. Success would only be esteemed by the unfashionable and little-known farmers of rural England. The farms which her late Majesty held for the longest time, and which became widely known, were at Windsor. They are not large, considering the wonderful success of the animals bred there. One, Shaw Farm, is a grazing farm with only one hundred and twenty acres of arable. The other, the Flemish Farm, covers four hundred acres, of which two hundred and forty are arable. They are cultivated "exactly as the shrewd and practical Prince Albert settled that they ought to be half a century ago." The whole management has been on a serious business system, and the Queen insisted that this, which was also arranged by Prince Albert, should be strictly adhered to. The land has been made to yield good crops, yet kept unexhausted, and so long as arable farming and corn were likely to pay this

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was made the main object. But it would not have been creditable had not the Queen made her farms profitable; and it was in the quick recognition of the necessity for making a change, and relying more on stock-breeding, that she again led the way among agriculturists. The Prince Consort was the actual tenant. Her Majesty, on his death, took over the land, like any farmer's widow, but caused the main attention of her servants to be directed to the rearing of pedigree cattle. Her herds of shorthorns, Herefords and Devons soon became famous. During the last eighteen years they have been among the most steady prize-winners for all-round excellence of the herds of England; and in the show season of last spring and summer they beat all previous records, the shorthorns winning forty-eight first prizes and twenty-two championships, and the Herefords twenty-eight first prizes and seven championships; the Devons won twenty-six first prizes.

The Royal Agricultural Society was founded in 1839. In 1840 the Queen became patron of the Society, and in little more than a year after his marriage the Prince Consort became a Governor. It was noticed that he was in the yard at York at six o'clock in the morning to see the animals without interruption.

The foresight which so early diverted the Royal farms mainly to the business of breeding pedigree cattle is remarkable. But the slowness with which discoveries are adopted in practical stock-breeding must not be taken as evidence that farmers are stupid. Until the last few years there has never been enough scientific evidence to show that the systems now generally adopted were right, though there has been abundant practical evidence that they are not far wrong. But from the days of Mr. R. Bakewell to the experiments in cross-breeding carried

out by Professor Ewart more than a century and a half elapsed, during which enormous progress was made in improving all our domestic animals; but the results were gained experimentally, not from any exact knowledge. It was in 1726 that Mr. Bakewell, a great stock-owner, first concluded that the methods of the day were wrong. It was the custom to try to improve a breed of cattle or sheep by crossing it with another breed, under the idea that something new and improved would result. It has now been shown conclusively by Mr. Ewart that, whether good or not, the result of crosses can *never be counted upon*. There is no uniform "reaction." The progeny may be like this or that parent, or totally unlike either; and though something good may perhaps result, the general tendency of the crosses is to "throw back" to some remote "unimproved" ancestor. This was shown, in a most interesting way, by the colts of hybrids between zebras and ponies. The colts were striped, but with the pattern of a more archaic type of zebra than their real parent. Bakewell, who knew nothing of this, threw up the current notion of crossing as hopeless, and devoted himself to picking out the best of each kind or family, and breeding from them, often "in and in" when necessary, and founded various much-improved breeds of cattle and sheep. The results of this method were true to type; given the right parents, they could be counted upon to produce like offspring.

Wars and troubles did not extinguish, but checked the results of this discovery. After the great war, and before the Queen's accession, the breeders of shorthorns once more began to work on the same lines. The logical result of Bakewell's discovery was that the members of each breed of cattle ought to be registered in books, so that the future improvers or owners might

know exactly what the properties of each were. Cattle and sheep were no longer mere counters. Each had certain gifts of body or milking powers, wool, or flesh, or constitution, which if known to be hereditary in them could be employed and reckoned upon to improve or alter the progeny. It was at first considered unnecessary to set down the qualities of each breed or family, for these were generally known. But as good stock multiplied, and shows were started all over England, the particular merits of each were embodied in the show awards. But before the accession of the late Queen there were only two such registers existing. One was that of thoroughbred horses; the other, first begun in 1822, the "Shorthorn Herd Book." From the point of view of the history of domestic animals, the whole of the reign has been devoted to the enumeration of all our best animals in these practical books of reference for the use of the propagators of this form of national wealth. It was the only means by which they could know what they were doing; and the work has gone on at great expense and with ungrudging industry. The Americans and others have followed our example, and the result is that there are sometimes more thousands of some particular English breed registered on that side of the Atlantic than on this. The American herd book of Suffolk cattle alone contains more than six thousand names. The late Queen gave the utmost practical encouragement to the great task of making a vast series of animal "Debretts" by making use of the results to produce from her own farms some of the finest animals yet bred in England. The last occasion on which she actually expressed her wishes on the subject of her own cattle, with a view to the future maintenance of the stock, was only last April. One of the latest and most val-

ued progeny of the Royal farms was a certain beautiful bull, called "Royal Duke," perhaps the most perfect specimen of male domestic cattle ever seen. It had won almost every possible prize in last year's shows, and her Majesty had more than once been to see it before it was sent off to win cups and medals. This is not a time when fancy prices are given for cattle; for the progress made during the reign has been such that animals of first-class pedigree and form are scattered broadcast over England. But the intelligent foreigner wanted this bull, and offered 1,500 guineas for it. The Queen, "by special intervention" caused the offer to be declined, considering that if the animal was worth this to foreigners, it was worth as much to her own country. During the long years of the reign nearly every distinct breed of cattle, horses, and later of sheep, and even swine, had its catalogue of true-born animal citizens. There is the "Shire Horse Stud Book," the "Clydesdale Stud Book," the "Suffolk Stud Book," the "Polo Pony Stud Book," and many others. Centres for producing each breed are formed in different counties, and the books give accurate information of where to find others needed to strengthen, amend, or alter the local stock. Thus the owners can choose their fancy, with regard to locality. Where soil or climate favors a particular breed, it is generally the one selected. But an owner may be breeding Jerseys in Staffordshire, or Clydesdales in Yorkshire, or Suffolks in Kent, and always knows where to look for more, and the precise qualities of each of the other colonies. There is an increase of every kind of pure-bred domestic animal all over England, from Hereford cattle to pigs and fowls, sporting dogs and fancy pigeons. The gain to the national wealth is enormous. England is a reservoir from which expensive stock is purchased for the farms of the

world. All classes from the highest to the humblest, are becoming interested in the business. The Queen receives the homage of sincere imitation, from the Peer who breeds shire horses by

the score to the small tradesman who gets £100 for a prize rabbit to go to Chicago or the ladies who now "run" farms and Jersey herds with credit and success.

The Spectator.

THE DOMESTIC NOVEL: AN INQUIRY.

The morning-room is comfortable, but so are not its occupants—only two—of whom the one has within the last five minutes sprung a mine upon the other. It must have been inside this small time-limit since the clock on the narrow eighteenth-century mantelpiece had struck the half-hour, while the footmen were carrying in the last lamp and dropping the last curtain.

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round
earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle
furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing
roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night-wind down the vast edges
drear
And naked shingles of the world.

The appearance of a novel by Rhoda Broughton, written in her first and sprightliest manner, naturally brings up the large question of "the domestic novel;" for Miss Broughton, admired by Mr. Andrew Lang, and disdained by Mr. Swinburne in a withering chance phrase, is, perhaps, the typical novelist of our domesticity. Endowed with wit, sentiment and a discerning eye for some aspects of character, she has during thirty and three years given a modest and refined pleasure, not only to the *petites dames conjugales*, but also to the great intellects philosophic, scientific, and economic, which

in hours of slippered ease graciously "unbend" themselves over a novel. It is significant, and probably no mere accident, that the opening lines of "Foes in Law" (Macmillan) should contain references to morning-rooms, mantelpieces, footmen, lamps, and curtains—the whole constituting a background for the fragrant cup and a proposal of marriage. "Instead of a cup of tea he has asked her for herself." And "he" is a curate, and "she" is named Lettice. All these things conspire. If Miss Broughton had purposely tried to embody the characteristics of her school in a single scene, she could not have bettered the first ten pages of "Foes in Law"—that novel which, without harming him, might divert an archdeacon; which is at this very moment being read by the mothers of the conquerors of the world; and which will doubtless be read by the conquerors too, when they come home.

Since most of the fiction of Balzac, Turgenev, Thackeray, Tolstoi, Meredith, d'Annunzio, Hardy and Zola is domestic, it may properly be asked what sinister or satiric import attaches to the term "domestic novel?" The answer lies in the fact that the adjective applies, not to the themes of this particular class of novel, but to its public. The domestic novel is so called because it is written for, not because it is written about, domesticity. At the same time, since it may

have wit, and even humor, and may be concerned with the affairs of adult people, it is not to be confused with the "story for girls." It is part of the artistic furniture of the home, like the ballad on the piano and the water-color on the wall. It is admitted because it respects that "sanctity of the English home" which some other things—for instance, the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill—are said to "invade." Dean Farrar once wrote a book whose sub-title is "The World of School." There is "a world of home," which preserves its qualities only by ignoring every other world. The English world of home is one of the most perfectly organized microcosms on this planet, not excepting the Indian *purdah*. The product of centuries of culture, it is regarded, not too absurdly, as the fairest flower of Christian civilization. It exists chiefly, of course, for women, but it could never have been what it is had not men bound themselves to respect the code which they made for it. It is the fountain of refinement and of consolation, the nursery of affection. It has the peculiar faculty of nourishing itself, for it implicitly denies the existence of anything beyond its doorstep, save the Constitution, a bishop, a rector, the seaside, Switzerland and the respectful poor. And its exclusiveness is equalled by its dogmatism. In the home there are no doubts, no uncertainties, no "open questions." The code, surpassing even that of Napoleon, provides for all contingencies. This is right: that is wrong—always has been, always will be. This is nice: that is not nice—always has been, always will be. The earth may spin like a fretful midge amid problems, philosophers may tremble with profound hesitations, partisans may fight till the arenas are littered with senseless mortality; but the home, wrapt in the discreet calm of its vast conserv-

atism, remains ever stable, a refuge and a seclusion for those who will accept its standards and agree not to create a disturbance.

It is for this wonderful institution, sublime in its self-reliance, living like a besieged city round which "ignorant armies clash by night," that the domestic novel has been brought into being. It arose naturally and inevitably upon demand, and it conforms to the conditions imposed upon it as precisely as a good child. The domestic novel was born in the home, and it has never been past the porch. When its time comes it will expire of neglect in the attic. There is the home and there is the world, and sometimes on very stormy days the domestic novel goes to the window and looks out, and brings back to the fireside a mild report of the embattled sky; but that is dangerous; it is better to put a log on the fire and talk serenely of the tranquil microcosm. Therefore the domestic novel is usually occupied with domesticity, and in a domestic way—a way which avoids trouble by taking everything for granted. Can there be aught more delightful than the home? And can one imagine a more desirable home than the first-class country house, where virtue, elegance and wealth have combined to produce an environment and a piece of machinery of ideal perfection? This is why the domestic novelist makes a parade of footmen and the apparatus of luxurious comfort: not so much from snobbery as because such things are the symbols of an ideal. "A good home"—what aspirations, narrow but intense, are in that phrase! Happily, even in the home, one is human, or the domestic novelist would be unable to extract his sedate dramas from that haunt of quietude. It is notorious, indeed, that the smaller the community and the more completely it is self-contained, the deeper will be its preoccupation with its own

trifling affairs. Hence the domestic novelist is likely never to be short of material. Miss Rhoda Broughton, in "Foes in Law," treats domestically of the warfare between a squire's sister and his wife, two women of opposite temperaments. No larger interest is involved, nothing but the friction of these twain in the spacious apartments of a fine country-house. Conceive the deliberate act of sitting down to compose a whole book about the *tracaseries* of sisters-in-law! Yet here the book is, written out in full; and clever, too, adroit, amusing, and—so far, but no further—realistic. Housekeeping, pet dogs, private theatricals, benevolent societies, visits, and a convenient final legacy of thirty thousand pounds: such are the materials of "Foes in Law," in which the tragedy of passion never rises higher than a misunderstanding, nor the ecstasy of it exceeds "domestic bliss."

The significant fact is, not that a witty and talented author should have selected themes like that of "Foes in Law," well assured that she would thereby give pleasure to an educated and refined public—Balzac did the same—but that she should have found success in treating them so trivially, with so absolute a detachment from the struggling world, with such a convinced air that here, concealed in this frothy mixture of jealousies and afternoon tea, was the essence of life, the

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one thing worthy to be talked about. Matthew Arnold, in his most human poem cried:

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round
earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle
furl'd.

But—

There is no *but* in the domestic novel, nor even the *but* sense, the vague, troubled apprehension of *buts*. The sea of faith, despite Matthew Arnold and all other would-be disturbers of an ancient peace, is still and glassy as that in which the infant characters paddle once a year.

Its melancholy, long, withdrawing
roar,

which for Matthew Arnold drowned every other noise, is not heard, nor the breath

Of the night-wind down the vast edges
drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Naked shingles of the world, indeed! At the first-class country-house, when the footmen by a united effort have dropped the last curtain, and instead of a cup of tea the curate has asked her for herself, there are no naked shingles of the world; only a lawn and a well-behaved moon.